DEVELOPING LAY LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE IN WAYMAN TEMPLE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....iv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....v

DEDICATION.....vii

INTRODUCTION.....1

CHAPTER

1. MINISTRY FOCUS.....4
2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS.....23

    Old Testament

    New Testament

3. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS.....51
4. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....70
5. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS.....88
6. PROJECT ANALYSIS.....107

    Introduction

    Methodology

    Implementation

    Conclusions

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....132

ABSTRACT

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by
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United Theological Seminary, 2018

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The context of this project is Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Jacksonville, Florida. The contextual problem is a need to develop the non-ordained leaders and church lay membership into more effective leaders. The hypothesis is if non-ordained leaders and the general lay membership are adequately trained, equipped and empowered, they will become more effective lay leaders, benefiting the pastor and the congregation. The objective was to interview current and potential lay leaders, have them complete a questionnaire, take them through a leadership-training program, and develop a model to increase their leadership effectiveness. The methodology will be qualitative research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is hard to believe that I have finally completed this project, and have become a "Doctor of the Church." Although the journey has been long, it has also been very rewarding and pleasant because of what I have learned, how I have grown, and most importantly the people that I have had the privilege to meet and work with along the way. Thank you to the administrators, faculty, staff, and students of the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

I particularly would like to say thank you to my mentors, Reverend Dr. Keith D.D. Lawrence, Dr. Connie Carter, and the late Reverend Dr. Kenneth Marcus, for your leadership and direction. There were times when I thought I would not finish this journey, but your words of encouragement and willingness to help made the difference. I would also like to say thank you to Dr. Donnell J. Moore for your assistance in the crucial editing process. I believe that our focus group, Effective Church Leadership and Prophetic Preaching in the 21st Century, was more like a family than a class. We always supported each other and never competed against each other. I will be forever grateful for the close bond and friendship that I shared and continue to share with my classmates, Reverend Dr. Rickey Lawson and Reverend Dr. Nathan Mugala.

In addition to my UTS family, my church family of Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church of Jacksonville, Florida played a great role in this project. Thank you for allowing me time away in classes and study, as I worked hard to become a

better pastor for you. Your patience with me will never be forgotten. To the members of my church who directly participated in this project, I am eternally grateful.

To my wife, daughters, and grandchildren, thank you for sharing me with the church and seminary. The times missed at family dinners, the grandkids' activities, and other precious family moments was a sacrifice that you willingly made. To my loving wife of more that thirty-five years, Dr. Cynthia Griffin, I love you for all you do to support me in life and ministry. I owe you for the many days and nights of being out of town at week intensives and focus group meetings, as well as days and nights when I was physically home, but mentally away working on studies and writing assignments.

Last but certainly not least, I thank the Lord for blessing me to complete this assignment. It is in Him that I live, move, and have my being. With God, all things are possible. Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to continue to perfect the calling that You placed on my life. All that I am, or ever hope to be, I owe it all to You.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my parents, the late Presiding Elder Henry Rogers Griffin, Jr. and Alberta Griffin. My father passed away on June 16, 2018, just a few months before I completed this work. Although he will not be physically present to see me receive my doctoral degree, I know he will be proudly looking down from heaven. All of my life, my father provided me with the perfect role model of a husband, father, grandfather and pastor. Unlike many people who have to search far and wide to find appropriate role models, I simply had to wake up in my father's home for the first twenty-one years of my life to find such an example.

My parents were married for sixty-five years up until his death. They raised me, and my three siblings to become productive, God-fearing adults. My father was a provider both financially and spiritually. A man of few words, he spoke volumes with his actions. A hard worker, he was a bi-vocational pastor for most of his pastoral career. Although he was bi-vocational, he never considered himself as a part-time pastor. He was a builder, preacher, singer and shepherd to all of the congregations that he was privileged to serve in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was so loved that many have remarked that the attendance at his homegoing celebration was akin to the opening day of an AME annual conference. One of the main reasons for his success was the unswerving support of love of my mother.

My father never pastored a congregation as large as the one I currently pastor. He never operated a church budget as large as my church budget. He never served on the General Board, never led a General Conference delegation, and never did many of the things I have been blessed to do. However, I've always recognized that my success in the church is the blessing that God bestowed upon my father through his son. I am who I am because of my father's love and commitment to the church and to the Lord.

His life and legacy lives on through our mother, and my siblings. He loved the church, and spent most of his latter years talking about the church and his many experiences. He was proud of each of my accomplishments, especially those involving the church. Education was always very important to my parents. When I started the pursuit of this degree three years ago, they were very, very proud. Although he has gone home to be with the Lord, I know he remains proud, knowing that I have finished what I started.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of developing local church laity for effective ministry service is not an issue to be taken lightly, especially since it is not a new issue. In the Old and New Testament, there are scriptures that speak to the subject of leading God's people. The most vivid examples are the priest and prophets of the Old Testament and the disciples and apostles of the New Testament. However for our purposes and for the purpose of this doctor of ministry project, Exodus 18:13-27 and Acts 6:1-7 provide the backdrop and foundation for understanding how ministry leadership can be expanded for greater depth and wider reach within the life of the church. When pastoral leaders develop the confidence within themselves to effectively delegate authority and responsibility, they can keep their eye on the most important things concerning their call and ministry.

In the Old Testament book of Exodus, the story of Jethro providing leadership to Moses gives insight into the wisdom of shared leadership, especially when done effectively. In the New Testament Book of Acts, it is the story of what happens when delegation does not occur. Here, the disciples began to neglect some of their duties creating a murmur throughout the town. However, they came together to delegate some of their work to those who were of good standing and full of the spirit and wisdom. This action expanded what could be done and allowed them to concentrate on prayer and administering the word.

The identified problem in the Wayman Temple AME church was the lack of effective delegation of tasks and responsibilities to leaders and officers of the church. Once the problem was recognized and acted upon, a shift in leadership began to occur in the life of the church. It is the hope that when replicated, this project model would benefit others pastors and leaders who struggle with trying to go it alone.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus brings together my spiritual journey and the historical journey of the congregation to identify some of the problems we have in common. This process is known as synergy. From this synergy, a problem statement, and hypothesis are developed and a project model is created.

Chapter two, Biblical Foundations looks at the problem statement created from the synergy from an Old and New Testament perspective. The biblical foundations identify the problem and solution to the problem as articulated in scripture. Validating the source and solution to the problem with scripture does at least two things: first, it suggests that the problem is not new; secondly, it suggests that while a biblical solution is given, that solution must be contextualized to meet the needs of the congregation today. Often we abandon the wisdom of the scripture when seeking to resolve issues and problems of the church, only to find that the remedy we select is grounded in scripture.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations takes a look at the problem and solutions to the problem from a historical perspective. In this chapter, the problem is chronicled from the days of John Wesley and how his ministry of delegation through circuit rider pastors and the class system made it possible for the expansion of the Methodist church through the United States.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations speak to the various theologies that inform the issue of delegation and empowerment of the laity. Soteriology, missiology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and black liberation theology are among the theological positions this chapter will explore in an attempt to undergird the theological issues that are presented when grappling with delegation and empowerment of lay leaders in the church.

Chapter five, Theoretical Foundations explores various methodologies and processes that lead to greater effectiveness when seeking to develop a second tier leadership using lay leaders in the life of the church. From these methodologies and processes, a new methodology or process is recommended and tested. Based on the results of the test and fieldwork, this process will be used as a source of replication in other congregations.

Chapter six, Project Analysis provides an analysis of the proposed project model, the project timeline, calendar and project methodology. Next, an exploration of the project implementation and subsequent data analysis is provided. This chapter ends with conclusive reflections of my experience in the doctor of ministry program, recommendations for improving the project, and how the project can be replicated in other ministry contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

As a seasoned pastor and an accountant with an MBA degree and business entrepreneurial experience, I feel that I have the necessary skills to be able to handle the needs of my context, Wayman Ministries. During my years of employment in corporate America, I learned the importance of time management, setting goals and objectives, meeting deadlines, planning, and the list goes on and on. I utilize my skills and training to facilitate forums and workshops for other pastors, churches, church groups, and non-profit organizations. I have also utilized these skills in building Wayman Ministries from a small, relatively obscure church in 1995 to a vibrant, growing church and ministry in 2018. However, I recognize that I have not been as effective in transferring some of these skills and abilities to my next tier of leadership, which would allow them to take on a shared leadership role so that the church could perhaps grow and thrive even more.

I have a keen interest in the long-term success and continued growth of Wayman Ministries. This is only the second church that I have pastored, and I do not foresee myself pastoring another congregation. At some point, either retirement or the pursuit of other interests could lead me to no longer be the pastor, or to take a less intensive role as pastor of the church. While there are some leaders who measure their success only on growth and vibrancy during their active administration, I believe that the true measure of successful leadership is based on what happens when the leader either leaves or reduces

his or her level of involvement. My desire to build a legacy, and a continuum of ministry growth and excellence is fueling my ministry focus after reaching my 23rd anniversary at Wayman Ministries.

There is a strong relationship between my ministry skills and interests and the needs of Wayman Ministries. In fact, the two are direct compliments of each other. It is not uncommon for members of my congregation to ask me what will happen once I leave or retire. As a pastor who is held in high regard by most of the bishops, general officers and lay leadership of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, I have been approached about placing my name in consideration for a leadership position at the Connectional level of the denomination. Although that is not my interest, I have learned over the years to never say no, as God is always in control. Instead of saying no to man, I have learned to remain silent, just in case I have to subsequently say yes to God. The reality of my context is that if I left the pastorate right now, I am doubtful that the ministerial staff and lay leadership that are currently in place could sustain what we have been able to build. This statement should not in any way be interpreted as an indictment against them. Instead, the statement points to my failure to train, develop, and trust them with more leadership responsibilities in the past. The irony of this statement is that I spend a considerable amount of time training other church leaders, but have not spent enough time training my own.

The following shall serve as my theme statement. Many of today's churches place too much dependence on the charisma, skills, and abilities of the senior pastor for their continued success. As a result, when the senior pastor retires, becomes ill, or leaves the church for any reason, the church is not able to sustain its level of success, unless the

succeeding leader has similar skills and abilities. Churches can better secure their long term futures and take undue stress off the senior pastor with a better trained second tier of leadership (deacons, stewards, trustees, assistant ministers).

Based upon my ministry context, and my interest, skills and experience, I offer the following hypothesis. Most second tier leaders in the local church setting can be developed into more effective leaders if they are enlightened, energized, educated, and empowered.

Context

Wayman Ministries is a vibrant organization with a solid reputation in the city of Jacksonville. Some of the strengths of Wayman Ministries include the long history, positive impact on the community, growth, and reputation in the marketplace, qualified and dedicated personnel, and solid financial strength. Founded in 1882, Wayman has been around a long time. In addition, my long tenure as the pastor has allowed the members to develop a sense of trust, which allows me more flexibility in moving the church towards the vision that God has for this body of believers. Having recently celebrated my 23rd anniversary as the pastor, I have the longest tenure of any pastor in the 136-year history of the church. The impact that Wayman Ministries has had, and continues to have on the community is well known in Jacksonville.

However, during the contextual analysis, I identified two key needs of the church and its related entities. One need was the need to develop a rate of growth commensurate with the level of positive impact that our ministry has on the residents of Jacksonville. Although we have grown, and continue to grow, I do not believe that our level of growth

is commensurate with the high level of consistent ministry that we perform in the city. Some of our regular guests who have not officially joined have expressed concerns about becoming AME.

The second need is the ability to have more shared leadership with the second tier leaders (those leaders below the senior pastor level). I feel that too much of the weight of the ministry is on my shoulders. Most of what I have described above has taken place under my leadership over the past twenty plus years. Prior to my arrival, there was no school, no community development organization, no second location, etc. Since I am the founder of most of what now is known as Wayman Ministries, I have felt the need to stay intricately involved with all aspects of our ministry, even though the ability to do so has become more difficult with growth. On the church side, I do most of the preaching and teaching, unless my travel schedule does not allow me to do so. As a result, the other preachers on my staff do not receive enough opportunities to develop their craft of preaching and teaching in the public. Preaching and teaching is no different from anything else from the standpoint that the more you practice, the better you become. If they are not given the opportunity to develop their skillset, they will not improve. Even though we have a very good staff of ministers, and a very good music department, the church relies on me to set the worship atmosphere. Many members will not come to church if they find out in advance that I am not preaching on Sunday or teaching on Wednesday. The level of dependence on my presence is too high, and unhealthy for the growth of the church.

Since its formation in 1999, I have been the chairman of the board of directors of Wayman Academy of the Arts. When board meetings conflict with my schedule, they are

usually cancelled, even if a quorum could have been present. Most decisions made by the principal are only made after consultation with me. Although there is no written rule to that effect, that has been the norm over the years, even with different principals. I am normally the person expected to resolve major issues involving the school, including employment matters, student/parent complaints, legal issues, and matters that create positive or negative public attention.

My level of involvement with Wayman Community Development Corporation is no different. Since its formation in 1995, I have been the chairman of the board of directors of this entity as well. When board meetings conflict with my schedule, they are normally cancelled, even if a quorum could have been present. Like in the case of the school, most major decisions involve me. I need to continue to work on myself so that I can further delegate to and trust others to help carry the vision that God continues to unfold.

However, an equal amount of responsibility lies on the key officers, members and employees of the ministry to step up and take responsibility for the work. There have been times where I have delegated responsibilities, only to have to come back later and pick up what someone else had not done. God has blessed Wayman Ministries with a number of qualified and dedicated church members, volunteers, and employees. Most of my direct reports are very hard working, and are very dedicated to the ministry and me. They are all at least college graduates, and continue to improve their technical skills and abilities. We have a very high retention rate at the higher levels of our staffing. Most are very supportive of not only the church, but also of our outside community initiatives. Yet, they do not seem to fully appreciate what it has taken to get the ministry to its current

level of success and productivity. They also do not seem to possess the ability to see the vision of what it will take to continue the path of growth and vibrancy that the ministry is currently on. They seem to be perfectly content in supporting whatever endeavor I bring to the table. While most pastors would be content with this level of support, I am much more concerned about the church's future than I am about my own.

I feel that if properly trained, my second tier of leadership (as well as any church's second tier of leadership) can develop into truly shared leaders in our ministry. With that level of shared leadership, not only will the church grow at a more rapid pace, but also the long-term future of the church will be more secure, regardless of the length of my tenure or the skillset of my eventual successor.

Ministry Journey

I have always had a strong desire and interest in seeing churches grow and thrive in an organized manner, and in such a way that does not place undue burden upon the senior pastor. I see so many vibrant ministries that virtually collapse when the senior pastor retires, becomes ill, or dies. The long-term success of these great ministries is so important to neighborhoods, communities, and our overall society that someone needs to develop organizational structures in these ministries that will allow them to survive and thrive in the event of leadership change.

As a preacher's kid, I grew up watching my father successfully pastor several churches in the African Methodist Episcopal Church denomination. Although he never pastored what most would consider to be a large church, he was nevertheless successful in the small churches that were under his leadership. However, I noticed that in almost

every case, the churches declined after he left. Some members would even follow him to his new church assignment. Former churches struggled, declined, and a few even closed down after his departure. This is not how church life should be.

Whether while growing up in my father's house or living in Houston, Texas or Jacksonville, Florida, I have always been very active in church. I have served as an usher, choir member, trustee, steward, minister of music, or any other capacity that I was gifted in or where the church needed help. I always felt that my job, as a member of any church, was to assist the senior pastor in furthering the gospel and the ministry by taking some of the responsibilities off of him or her. Particularly as minister of music, I always maintained a good relationship with my senior pastor, and made sure that drama and other negative behavior commonly associated with church music ministries was never the senior pastor's concern. I made sure that the choirs were properly organized, that they operated by clearly communicated rules and regulations, that choir rehearsals started and finished on time, that choir attire was appropriate, and that choir members were encouraged to live out the life that they sang about. As minister of music, I made sure that the senior pastor never had to worry about the choir on Sunday mornings.

I have always hoped that the same level of commitment and dedication that I had towards my senior pastor and church when I was not a pastor would be the same level of commitment and dedication that my members would have towards me as their senior pastor. So far, I do not feel that they have that same level of commitment and dedication.

Even my first church has had periods of struggle since I left over twenty years ago. Many of then still call me their pastor, and will contact me if a significant event occurs in the life of the church. I now look back and realize that although I had a successful three

plus years there, I did not take the time to adequately train the second tier of leadership. As a result, they have risen or fallen, based on who the senior pastors have been since my departure.

Although I did not realize it at the time, God's plan of allowing me to obtain a business education, and then work in the business world prior to calling me to preach has been key to both my development, and the training and development I have given to other pastors and congregations. The accounting degree from Florida A&M University has been very helpful in allowing me to understand the business language of any organization, including the church. The MBA degree furthered that learning. My employment for major corporations, CPA firms, and even a few entrepreneurial ventures has more than equipped me to be able to navigate the after Sunday responsibilities of a pastor and a church.

I currently perform regular workshops for individual churches and church groups throughout the state of Florida and beyond, equipping saints for the church. God also allowed me to write a book entitled *Pastor, CEO*, which compares (and in some cases, contrasts) the responsibilities of a pastor in the local church to the responsibilities of a corporate CEO. In the book, I try to help the senior pastor who has been gifted to preach to understand the importance of business and management skills in operating the church, which is not just a Sunday morning venture. In the book, one of the chapters deals with human resource management. Human resource management includes not only the paid staff, but volunteers as well. Since most churches operate primarily on volunteer personnel, it is imperative that senior pastors know how to effectively manage and inspire these ministry workers.

Developing The Synergy

My context, Wayman Ministries, and my personal ministerial development are now about to intersect into a critical stage, which will determine the future course of both the ministry and me, the minister. Subsequent to the writing of both my spiritual autobiography and my contextual analysis papers, I have taken on another pursuit that will further compromise my schedule and require even more delegation in order for me and the ministry to be successful.

A few days ago, I announced that I would run for a State Representative seat in the Florida House of Representatives. The amount of time and effort that will be needed to campaign will require more time away from my church office and possibly the pulpit. If I am successful in my campaign, I will have to spend at least two months in Tallahassee during the legislative session. Additional speaking engagements and attending public events will also increase. Needless to say, I really need to move forward in developing my next tier of leadership at Wayman Ministries.

My Proposed Topic

I propose to focus my Doctor of Ministry project on the topic of "Developing Lay Leadership for Effective Service in Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church." I have proposed this topic because it has been my lifelong experience and observation that very few African American churches spend enough time and resources in developing this second tier of leaders. Most of these churches focus most of their energy and resources on the senior pastor. I have seen churches spend as much as three years searching for the right senior pastor. Yet they spend very little time determining

who should be the stewards, deacons, or trustees. Many have very limited requirements for the other ministers who share the rostrum with the senior pastor. There is little to no formal training or continuing education. Most are concerned with titles and positions, as opposed to efficiency and effectiveness.

In my experience, I have noticed that predominately white churches are more likely to hire other pastors who help the senior pastor carry out the responsibilities of ministry. In those contexts, paid youth pastors, administrative pastors, pastors to seniors, outreach pastors are often employed by the church as a vital means to ministry functionality. One may quickly surmise that most churches cannot afford to pay for full or part time ministerial staff. However, I am aware of many African American churches that can pay for such services, but still refuse to do so. Even in cases where cost may be a factor, unpaid volunteer staff can also be developed and trained to help further the roles and responsibilities of the church.

Another factor that causes limited second tier leadership effectiveness in the African American church is the unwritten rule that the African American church senior pastor is a superhuman who is just a few steps away from being God. Both senior pastors and the people they lead and serve usually have unrealistic expectations of the senior pastor role. In the African American church experience, the senior pastor is normally expected to perform all of the hospital visits, commune the sick and shut-in members, counsel bereaved families, perform pre-marital counseling for engaged couples, officiate all weddings and funerals, preach at every worship service, return every members' telephone calls, and still be on call twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. Although this is clearly too much work for one individual, the senior pastor works tirelessly to try

to meet all of these responsibilities, usually at a fraction of what they should be paid for their work. Needless to say, burnout and/or a desire to leave that setting is normally the end result. We are seeing an increasing number of pastors who are committing suicide, having nervous breakdowns, family problems, or simply leaving the ministry. What a tragedy it is to see men and women who were called by God to perform the most important task on earth (lead lost souls to Christ) that leave their calling because of the pressures of that calling. These pressures are not inherently imbedded in the calling itself, but in inadequate systems and structures which are not properly designed to allow others to properly share in the load of the senior pastor.

While the superhuman, closest thing to God pastor is juggling his or her schedule trying to accomplish all of these tasks, well meaning church officers sit on the sidelines supportively cheering him or her on. In my book, I recall the true story of a church congregation that gave their pastor a standing ovation when it was announced that the pastor had never taken a vacation. They perceived that as a testament to the pastor's commitment to the church, its members, and ministries. Instead of applauding the pastor, they in my opinion, should have been booing themselves for not forcing the pastor that they love to take some time off to rest and relax. Most do not recognize that they can best help their pastor not by cheering, but by assisting. At the same time, church members have to be trained to understand that a visit and a prayer by a trained church officer is just as effective during a time of illness as a prayer by their pastor.

Before I move forward, I want to share a true story that just came to mind. I did not include this in my spiritual autobiography, but I think it helps make the case regarding the importance of this topic. A number of years ago, I had an older member

who was very sick over a long period of time. He was a war veteran who was exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. We knew that death for him was imminent, as his health continued to decline. At the request of his wife, our men's ministry made arrangements to visit him on a regular basis, even though their home was a considerable distance outside of the Jacksonville city limits.

My wife and I had planned to take a cruise. Because my wife is not particularly fond of cruises (especially the motion of the ship during inclement weather), we upgraded our cabin to one of the largest and most luxurious cabins on the ship. Unfortunately, my member died about a week before our scheduled cruise. Although I informed the widow that we had a pre-planned cruise, she insisted on having the funeral at the very time that we were scheduled to be on our cruise vacation. She also stated that she did not want anyone else doing the eulogy but me.

Trying to be the good, superhuman, closest thing to God pastor, I allowed one of my wife's dear friends to go on the cruise with her, as I stayed behind to be supportive of the widow and the family. Just a few weeks after the funeral, I received a communication from the widow that she was leaving the church because she did not feel the church was as supportive as it should have been during her husband's illness. She did leave the church, and I felt foolish for missing an opportunity to spend with my wife in an unsuccessful attempt to be there for another family.

This project will not only help develop the second tier of leadership, but it will also help the senior pastor understand the importance of relying on that second tier of leadership, and in training the congregation to accept ministerial support from persons other than the senior pastor. I think this is a major difference between many African

American churches and predominately white churches. Not only do African American members have an unrealistic expectation of their senior pastors, but the typical African American senior pastor has an unrealistic expectation of themselves. When they cannot make every meeting, hospital visit, or appointment; guilt frequently sets in. These well-meaning pastors have to adjust to the fact that they cannot be all things to all people. If they fall out with a stroke and die, the church will find a replacement pastor and move on. I have seen far too many senior pastors whose health fails while they are taking care of the flock. When they become too incapacitated to continue to pastor effectively, the members are usually sympathetic for a brief season. However, if the senior pastor does not recover soon enough, they will find another pastor. It is at that point that the now former pastor realizes that the church could indeed go on without them.

The Relevance Of My Skills And Interests

I believe that I possess the perfect combination of interests, experience, and training in order to complete this project, which I believe will be a blessing not only to my congregation, but to many other churches that are struggling with improving its second tier leadership. First, I am highly interested in this subject because it has a direct impact on the long-term growth and future of the church that I pastor and love. I have not spent the last twenty years developing a transformational ministry only to see it decline when the day comes when I will no longer be the pastor, or when I take a lesser role in the church as the senior pastor. I know first hand the struggles and pressures of trying to maintain a vibrant ministry, with well over one hundred employees, without sufficient leadership at the next lower level. I know that there are other senior pastors who share

these same sentiments. In denominational settings where the ministry is itinerant (that is, senior pastors are periodically reassigned to other churches by the bishop), the topic is even more relevant. I believe if more officers in African Methodist Episcopal churches and United Methodist churches were adequately trained, the change in the senior pastor will not have as dramatic of an impact on those local assemblies.

Over twenty-three years of pastoring Wayman Temple AME Church, and almost twenty-eight years of pastoring in the African Methodist Episcopal church gives me the necessary experience to pursue and successfully complete this project. As the accountant for the Eleventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, I travel throughout the state of Florida assisting churches in the areas of leadership and administration. In addition to performing numerous workshops, I have had to assist churches in bank negotiations, foreclosure proceedings, financing and re-financing, and many other financial and administrative matters. In many cases, I have found that the change in senior pastor leadership became the impetus for the problems that many of the churches found themselves in. In some cases, the prior pastor was a poor leader who either created or refused to address problems during their tenure. The subsequent pastor was then saddled with the responsibility of fixing what he or she found upon arrival as the new pastor. In other cases, the prior pastor was a dynamic leader, whose departure resulted in the decline of the church. In either case, I believe strong second tier leadership could have either prevented or mitigated some of these issues. My experience tells me so.

Finally, my formal education and training, along with my work experience in corporate America and as an entrepreneur is very relevant to this project. Having obtained both an accounting degree and an MBA degree are valuable assets. Having

owned several businesses, including a CPA practice and a printing business helps me to understand the importance of hiring, training, and delegating to others. My experience in performing workshops and the utilization of technology are also very relevant to this undertaking.

The General Nature and Content of Proposed Project

The proposed project will consist of four distinct phases. Phase I will consist of a pre-test, which will be given to a group of second tier leaders in the local church. Phase II will consist of workshops and training for those second tier leaders. Phase III will consist of a post-test, to determine what the second tier leaders learned from the workshops and training. Finally, Phase IV will consist of a personal reflection statement from each participant, which will ascertain any changes that the second tier leaders plan to make in their roles or leadership.

The Phase I pre-test will be given to second tier leaders such as trustees, stewards, and staff ministers. This test is expected to be a simple, multiple-choice document, which will ask questions in three areas. The first area will contain questions about the church. It is important to know how much the second tier leaders know about their church, especially facts and information that they should know. These questions will include church history, organizational structure, policies and procedures, certain membership demographics, and the overall future and vision of the church. The second area will contain questions about their perceived roles and responsibilities in their particular leadership assignment. We will explore where they fall on the organizational chart, the level of authority and responsibility that they have, and whether or not their job

description and responsibilities are in writing. Their answers to these questions will inform the subsequent training and development that will take place. The third and final section of questions will focus on the second tier leaders' understanding and perceptions of the senior pastor's roles and responsibilities. The purpose of these questions is to probe their understanding of what a senior pastor is supposed to do. It is my guess that they will see the senior pastor's role as being responsible for many more duties than what it should be.

Based in part on the review and the answers from the pre-test, Phase II will involve workshops and training for the second tier leaders. This session (or sessions) will discuss and review church history, church demographics, church ministries, and the vision of the church. In addition, there will be training and discussion regarding the roles and responsibilities of the second tier leadership positions. There will also be training and discussion on the role of the senior pastor, especially based on Ephesians 4:12 (equipping of the saints for the work of ministry).

After the completion of all workshops and training, a post-test will be administered to the second tier leaders. The results of the post-test will be compared to the results of the pre-test, to determine how much knowledge was gained through the workshops and training. The results of both the pre-test and post-test will be shared confidentially with each participant, as well as aggregately with the entire group. The goal of sharing the results is to show the level of enlightenment that the second tier leaders have obtained through this process.

The fourth and final phase, Phase IV, will involve participants writing a brief personal reflection of their experience. This reflection will serve at least two purposes.

First, this reflection will be used as an evaluation tool for me, so that future exercises of this nature can be more meaningful to future participants. Secondly, and most importantly, this writing exercise will challenge each second tier leader to articulate how they see themselves taking on more responsibility in their current role to assist the church and the senior pastor in furthering the gospel of Jesus Christ and the various ministry endeavors of their local church.

What I Seek To Learn Through This Project

As a result of this project, I seek to learn how to increase the capacity and the participation of second tier leaders in the local congregations of many African American churches. This project will help me to discover the relationship between training and development and the individual leader's willingness to take on more responsibility in the local church.

I also hope to gain a better understanding of how much second tier leaders really know about their church—its history and well as its future plans. My hypothesis is that many lay leaders that we have in the church do not feel that they have a vested interest in knowing beyond a surface level. Also, I believe that many may be under the sometimes false impression that the senior pastor really enjoys doing all that he or she does, and may even resent more involvement by second tier leaders.

I hope to enlighten senior pastors on the importance of training and developing their ministerial staff and lay leaders so that they can be more effective in carrying some of the responsibilities of the church. Senior pastors will be able to envision their second tier leaders as allies instead of adversaries. In many instances, senior pastors see

competent preachers on their ministerial staff as their possible future replacement. Therefore, they will not give them many opportunities to preach, which is to the detriment of both the minister and the congregation.

Finally, I seek to learn how I can use this model to help expand the leadership base at Wayman Ministries, and how I can further develop this model into a workshop and training series to be used at other churches. As my responsibilities in the community increase, and as I get older, I will need a stronger second tier of leadership in order to ensure the continued success of Wayman Ministries. I need to make sure the stewards and trustees of Wayman Temple AME Church can handle the routine responsibilities of the church in order that we will continue to grow and thrive. I need to know that the Board of Directors of both Wayman Academy of the Arts and Wayman Community Development Corporation are not dependent on me to ensure that both corporations operate at their maximum capacity and efficiency. This project will help ensure that Wayman Ministries as a whole can function with or without my intense involvement in the future.

Conclusion

The development of second tier leadership in the African American church is critical to the long-term success of most of these churches. When dynamic senior pastors leave service due to illness, retirement, or death, the local congregation's future success is almost completely dependent upon selecting the right successor. Sometimes the right successor is chosen, while other times they are not. An inordinate amount of pressure is placed on the senior pastor because second tier leaders either do not understand the

importance of their role, or they are not given the opportunity to share some of the leadership responsibilities.

This project could have a profound effect on those African American congregations and pastors who struggle to balance the many roles of the senior pastor with the many needs of the congregation and ministry. Instead of sitting on the sidelines wondering when the senior pastor will be able to attend to a task, lay leaders will learn how they can roll up their sleeves to assist the senior pastor in fulfilling ministry responsibilities. Senior pastors will hopefully see their ministerial staff and lay leaders as co-laborers in the gospel, who are there to assist and cooperate with them, not attack and criticize them. The church ministry as a whole can realize faster growth and more success, while reducing the level of burnout and stress on their senior pastor. In many situations, the person who calls himself or herself the senior pastor does not have any junior pastors. It is my hope that the importance of other pastoral roles (such as visiting the sick, ministering to youth, etc.) will prompt senior pastors and their church leadership in establishing formal pastoral roles with personnel that is both paid and volunteer.

I have seen how insufficient second tier leadership has impacted my ministry, and want to work to fix this for my church as well as others. Enhancing second tier leadership should lead to church growth and membership retention, and also could result in the preservation of senior pastors, as they receive the help they need from the leaders in their churches.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This project is entitled "Developing Lay Leadership for Effective Service in Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church." The essence of this topic is to look at ways to develop the local church's leadership team just below the level of the senior pastor. Experience indicates that many African American churches rely heavily on the senior pastor for its overall health, growth, and development of the church, its congregants and its ministries. As soon as the pastor leaves, retires, gets sick, or dies, too many of our African American churches struggle during and beyond the leadership transition. The development of second tier leaders such as staff ministers, deacons, stewards, and trustees will greatly assist the senior pastor in leading the church, and will support the church during times of leadership transition.

To look at this issue from a biblical perspective, Exodus and Acts have been chosen as the Old and New Testament texts to validate how the issues of leadership, especially second tier leadership was handled biblically. The Old Testament pericope is taken from Exodus 18:13-27:

> The next day Moses sat as judge for the people, while the people stood around him from morning until evening. When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?" Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between

> one person and another, and I make known to them the statutes and instructions of God." Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me. I will give you counsel, and God be with you! You should represent the people before God, and you should bring their cases before God; teach them the statutes and instructions and make known to them the way they are to go and the things they are to do. You should also look for able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain; set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. Let them sit as judges for the people at all times; let them bring every important case to you, but decide every minor case themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. If you do this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people will go to their home in peace." So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men from all Israel and appointed them as heads over the people, as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. And they judged the people at all times; hard cases they brought to Moses, but any minor case they decided themselves. Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went off to his own country.[1]

The New Testament pericope is taken from Acts 6:1-7:

> Now during those days, And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

These two passages show that the issue of delegation and shared leadership is not new to God's Kingdom. Over the next few pages, we will examine each pericope in more detail. In examining these texts, we will discuss the historical context; the literary context; the form, structure and movement, a detailed analysis and concluding thoughts.

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[1] Exodus 1:8-11, New Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from the NRSV.

Exegetical Analysis Of Exodus 18:13-27

Historical Analysis

The book of Exodus is one of the first five books of the Bible, which collectively are commonly referred to as the Pentateuch, which means first five books or the books of law. Most scholars ascribe authorship of the book of Exodus and the other four books to Moses. The book is named after the Exodus event in which God leads the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage to freedom. The book of Exodus is believed to have been written prior to Moses' death in 1400 B.C.

The book of Exodus begins where Genesis ends, which is where the descendants of Joseph have moved to Egypt to escape the famine. Although originally welcomed there, they were later treated harshly because of their population growth, which could have eventually outnumbered the Egyptians. The change in their status in Egypt is summarized in Exodus 1:8-11:

> Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor.[2]

According to *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, the book of Exodus falls naturally into three major divisions: 1) Israel in Egypt (1:1-12:36); 2) Israel in the Wilderness (12:37-18:37); and 3) Israel at Mt. Sinai (19:1-40:38).[3] Prior to Exodus,

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[2] Ex 1:8–11.

[3] Herbert Lockyer, Sr. gen. ed., *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 2014).

Moses has led the people of Israel from bondage to freedom, and is nearing the end of the wilderness portion of their journey.

Exodus covers the persecution of Israel at the hands of Pharaoh in chapter 1. Chapter 2 presents Moses, from the account of his birth, his placement in the River Nile by his Hebrew mother to save his life, and his rescue by Pharaoh's daughter. This chapter also shows Moses' quest for justice on behalf of others, in one case killing an Egyptian to avenge a Hebrew, and in the other, coming to the aid of seven daughters of a Midian Priest. Coincidently, or providentially, most theologians believe that this Midian priest was Jethro. Both instances are precursors to his role in leading the Israelites from Pharaoh's hand of bondage.

In chapter 3, God speaks to Moses via a burning bush, and tells him that He has heard the cries of the Israelites, and that He has chosen Moses to deliver them from oppression. Moses responds to God by asserting that he is not worthy to perform the task. God tells Moses that He would be with him, and uses Moses' staff as proof of His power over the situation. In chapter 4, God allows Moses to have Aaron as his partner.

Beginning in chapter 5, Moses begins to tell Pharaoh that God wants Pharaoh to let God's people go. Instead of immediately releasing them, Pharaoh actually makes the Israelites work harder by requiring them to make bricks without straw. In chapter 6, God reassures Moses that God would eventually lead the people of Israel to freedom in spite of the fact that their situation appears to be getting worse in the short run. Starting in chapter 7 and continuing through chapter 10, God causes a series of ten plagues to come upon Egypt because of Pharaoh's refusal to let God's people go, as commanded by God and communicated by Moses.

Eventually, the final plague, the death of the firstborn sons, occurs in chapter 11. This causes Pharaoh to finally, albeit temporarily, release the children of Israel. In chapter 12, the Israelites finally leave Egypt. Chapter 13 records that a pillar of clouds led the Israelites by day and a pillar of fire by night. In chapter 14, Pharaoh changes his mind about freeing the children of Israel. He pursues them as far as the Red Sea. Initially, the people of Israel were afraid and thought that they would have been better off if Moses had left them in Egypt. However, Moses assured the people that God would deliver them. Continuing into chapter 15, the children of Israel cross the Red Sea on dry land. When Moses lifted his staff, the waters of the Red Sea stood up as two walls of water—one on their left and one on their right. However, as Pharaoh's army pursued them, Moses lowered his staff and the waters of the Red Sea drowned Pharaoh's army. Thus, God's people were finally free of Pharaoh.

Detailed Analysis

The account of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law giving him advice on delegating leadership has a parallel passage found in Deuteronomy 1:9-18. In the Deuteronomy passage, however, there is no mention of Jethro; only Moses informing the people of his plan to select additional leaders to help him manage the leadership of the people of Israel.

Moses was chosen by God to lead the people of Israel from bondage to freedom. He was born the child of a Hebrew woman at a time when the Hebrews (or Israelites) had become a threat to the Egyptians because of their population growth. To control their population, the Egyptian king ordered that all newborn Hebrew male children were to be killed. In an attempt to save his life, his Hebrew mother hid him at the edge of the water,

where the Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter subsequently found him. After finding him, she names him Moses, which is interpreted in Hebrew as drawn out of the water. "When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, because, she said, "I drew him out of the water."[4]

Although born a Hebrew, Moses grew up in an Egyptian household and culture, which prepared him for his destiny. Moses witnessed an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew. As a result, Moses killed the Egyptian and initially thought his deed had gone unnoticed. However, after discovering that this murder was known, he fled to the backside of a mountain, which is from where God called him to lead the Israelites from bondage to freedom.

After being chosen by God to lead the people of Israel out of bondage, Moses felt the full weight of being a leader of a growing group of people. The statement made by an Egyptian, when they first made slaves out of the Israelites evidenced their growth.

> Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.[5]

Because of the large number of Israelites, the job of being their sole leader, even though ordained and called by God to do so, began to overwhelm Moses. As their leader, Moses first had to be their liberator. Against his own will, God commanded him to go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go. However, as most leaders, Moses felt inadequate to perform the task. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"[6]

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[4] Ex 2:10.

[5] Ex 1:8-20.

[6] Ex 1:8-20.

Moses replied. Nevertheless, one of his first responsibilities as God's chosen leader was to liberate the Israelites from the hands of an oppressive Pharaoh.

In addition to being a liberator, Moses' leadership responsibilities also called for him to become a priest and prophet. He was responsible for delivering to the people the Word of God. Since there was no Bible at that time, he had to hear from God himself, and share with the people what thus says the Lord. This became evident in Exodus 19, where Moses ascends up Mount Sinai to receive the Law from God, and in Exodus 20, where he returns from the mountaintop to deliver the Law of God to the people.

As a leader, Moses was also the people's guide. After delivering them from bondage, he had to lead them to their promised land. For forty years, Moses had to lead the people wandering through their wilderness experience. The scripture records numerous accounts of challenges that Moses faced in keeping the people encouraged and focused during their wilderness experience. Although God led them with a pillar of clouds by day and a pillar of fire by night, the journey was still difficult and required great patience and endurance from Moses as he guided the Israelites to a land they had never seen before.

In addition, Moses the leader had to also be the mediator between the people. Moses' desire to be a mediator and apply justice was evident even prior to the call of God on his life. Exodus 2 records the account of Moses observing an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. Moses killed the Egyptian in an effort to secure justice for the Hebrew. In that same chapter, Moses defends seven daughters of the priest of Midian, who were trying to water their father's flock. On this occasion, some shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses defended them and made sure that their flock received water. Therefore, the

idea of Moses being a mediator and liberator was well established before God's call on his life.

On the one hand, it appears that Moses possessed certain leadership qualities that God would use to bring deliverance to the people of Israel who were being oppressed by Pharaoh. Perhaps God chose Moses because God saw his ability to be a liberator, priest, prophet, and mediator. On the other hand, perhaps God placed those skills and abilities in him from birth, and allowed him opportunities to discover and develop his skills before being called by God to lead the people of Israel. Either way, it is very clear that a leader needs certain skills and abilities to accomplish the task that God has assigned to them. Moses clearly had the skills, passion, and ability. Yet, he still needed help.

A part of Moses' leadership responsibilities included making decision of judgment when two or more Israelites had a dispute. In order to do so, Moses would sit in his seat of judgment, and the people would come out to meet with him. Because there were so many people with disputes, and because Moses was the only person authorized to hear and decide the disputes, the people would stand around him from morning to evening, waiting for their opportunity to bring their cause before Moses.

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, observed the process of judging, and realized that the process was very inefficient. He questioned Moses' approach to providing leadership. Although the New Revised Standard Version stated he asked, "What is this that you are doing for the people?" he was really asking why are you doing it this way. He asked him why are you sitting here alone (i.e., without any help), while the people stand around all day waiting for you to hear their case? Sometimes it is easier for others to see areas of improvement in our lives because they are able to be more objective. Because Moses was

directly involved in judging the people, and because he performed this function from early in the morning until late in the evening, he perhaps had neither the physical or mental capacity to see opportunities to do things in a better way. Also, he may have become so engrained in how he was doing it until he subconsciously concluded that there was no better way. Fortunately for Moses and the people, Moses was willing to hear and accept wise counsel. Leaders in today's church could help themselves and the people that they lead if they, like Moses, were open to receiving wise counsel.

The fact that Jethro was an objective observer is also important. He was not as emotionally connected to the process as Moses was. These were Moses' people, not Jethro's. He could take the time to stand back and really observe from afar. He could see the proverbial forest, while Moses could not get beyond the trees. It is important in ministry that we occasionally step out of our roles to take more of any objective look both at what we are doing, why we are doing it, and the way that we do what we do. Often times, we are not able to take that step away, so it is important that we bring in outside eyes, ears, and minds to give us a different perspective on the efficiency and effectiveness of our ministries.

In addition to Moses' inability to be objective, it is also quite possible that the people were not able to be objective. Even though the long slow process impacted them, scripture does not record any open complaint on their part. Perhaps they did not want to be critical of Moses. After all, they would be subject to his ruling, so they would not want to compromise their own well being by criticizing him. Or, they may have become so used to the current process that they became complacently satisfied with the status quo. In many of today's churches, resistance to change emanates from the pew more so than

the pulpit. Like the people of Israel, many church members do not want to complain because it may be interpreted as opposition to the leader. In some churches, lay officers are afraid that they may lose their positions of leadership. As a result, change is stifled and the status quo remains, although better approaches to ministry may exist. However, Jethro, because of his objective independence, is able to ask Moses why he is doing what he is doing.

Moses replied, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God." This is a common response from God's chosen leaders. Many pastors and spiritual leaders feel that since God called them to leadership, it is a responsibility that they cannot and should not share with others. Moses explains that the people come to him when they have disagreements. Perhaps he was thinking, "Who am I to delegate the Lord's assignment to someone else?" He may have surmised that if the Lord wanted someone else to perform the task, or if He wanted a group of people to perform the task, He would have selected them Himself.

Moses' response also suggests that he did not fully understand his father in law's question. Jethro was not asking what he was doing. Jethro could see what he was doing with his own eyes and observation. What he was asking was why are you doing it that way. He was not questioning the what, nor was he questioning the why. However, he was questioning the how. In ministry, leaders need to spend time pondering the how question. Many of the things we do, such as preaching and teaching the Bible, worshipping and praising the Lord, and fellowshipping with the saints of God define what we do. And why we do it (to glorify God and edify the people) goes without question. However, given an ever-changing society, we should pause periodically and question how we do what we do.

While the message of the cross does not change, the methodology in which we communicate it must change.

Jethro replied to Moses by telling him that what he is doing is not good. It is important to note that what Jethro describes as not being good is not what Moses is doing, but instead the way he goes about doing it. Jethro further explains that Moses would wear himself out as well as the people. Verse 23 of this pericope also implies that everyone was not going back to their respective homes in peace, which suggests that the current process was generating some level of unresolved strife. One theologian makes the following assertion:

> They not only got wearied out through long waiting, but, judging from verse 23, very often began to take the law into their own hands on account of the delay in the judicial decision, and so undermined the well-being of the community at large.[7]

He continues by telling Moses he could not be efficient by continuing to do this alone. He tells him that he would give him some advice, and offers a blessing by stating God be with you. Although this statement is clearly a blessing, some theologians also believe that Jethro may also be saying if you follow my advice, God will be with you.

> Jethro's counsel was given merely in the form of a suggestion; it was not to be adopted without the express sanction and approval of a better and higher Counselor; and although we are not informed of it, there can be no doubt that Moses, before appointing subordinate magistrates, would ask the mind of God, as it is the duty and privilege of every Christian in like manner to supplicate the divine direction in all his ways.[8]

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[7] C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament,* vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 1996), 377.

[8] R. Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, & D. Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible,* vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 61.

Although some theologians believe that Jethro is giving Moses Godly advice, and God-inspired advice, all theologians do not agree on this point. Some believe that adhering to Jethro's advice went against the will of God.

> One thing that this passage does is to warn God's servant's against following the advise of their relatives according to the flesh. Jethro's eye was not upon God, but upon Moses. It was not the eternal glory of Jehovah, which was before him, but the temporal welfare of his son-in-law.[9]

Jethro clearly invokes the name of God in his suggestion to Moses. Leaders must understand that although God does communicate to us by way of signs and other supernatural means, the primary source of communication is through the conduit called humankind. The fact that Jethro is the messenger does not automatically mean that the message is not from God.

As a Midian priest, Jethro was a leader, and perhaps had experienced some of the challenges of not having a second tier of leadership to help lead a group of people. Therefore, he may have been speaking from experience. He saw how far Moses had come in leading the people by himself, and perhaps realized there was much more that Moses could accomplish if he delegated some tasks to others. This shows the importance of more senior, experienced leaders providing counsel and advice to newer, up and coming leaders. Too often younger leaders feel like they know it all, and will not take advice from older, more experienced leaders. In other cases, older insecure leaders will not provide assistance to younger leaders out of fear that the younger leader will eventually replace them. Neither was the case with Moses and Jethro.

Before he directly advises Moses to enlist additional help, he first instructs Moses to teach the people the statutes and instructions of God, and tell them how they should go

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[9] A. W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1962), 149.

about doing their daily duties. However, the Hebrew word that has been translated to the word teach in the NSRV Bible actually has a stronger meaning. The original Hebrew word really means to warn or caution, instead of teach. Therefore, what Jethro is really telling Moses to do is to warn or caution them about the laws of God. As a result of his strong warning, they will be more apt to listen to him, as he further teaches them how they should go, based on the laws of God.

In other words, he is suggesting to Moses that if he adequately impresses upon the people the laws of God, and how important the laws of God are to their very existence, perhaps many of them will no longer have to seek out his advice and counsel. They will be able to make decisions and settle some disputes for themselves. However, for those that will continue to come to him, Jethro realized that Moses would still need some help.

The first part of Jethro's instructions involves Moses and his relationship with God. In verse 19, he tells Moses that he should represent the people before God. In other words, Moses' primary relationship is not Moses and the people, but Moses and God. Perhaps these instructions were vital to Moses understanding his roles when he later goes up Mt. Sinai to commune with and receive instructions from God on behalf of the people. Jethro also tells Moses that he should bring their cases before God. Again, there is an emphasis on relying more on God, and less on himself.

It is only after he reestablishes the Moses-God relationship that Jethro focuses on the Moses-people relationship. He continues his instructions by telling Moses to focus on teaching the people the law of God. The inference is that if the people are first taught the law, and then how to interpret and apply the law to their own situations, there will be less need for the people to have to come to him or anyone else to solve their problems. In this

way, Moses would empower the people by teaching them to do some things for themselves, as opposed to relying on him or others. Insecure leaders do not believe in empowering others. Therefore, they continue to do for others what others should be taught to do for themselves. The importance of teaching the word of God was as important in the Old Testament as it is today.

Jethro advised Moses to find people who could assist him in making judgments among the people. He also gives Moses specific qualities to look for in searching for help. He first instructs him to find people who have the ability. It is important in leadership to make sure that those to whom responsibility is delegated have the ability to perform the delegated duties. He then tells him to select people who fear God. Since the task was one of making Godly judgments among the people, it was imperative that the persons to be selected had a reverential fear and relationship with God. He then informs him to select people who could be trusted. One of the reasons why the people would stand all day and wait for Moses was because they trusted him and the decisions that he made. It would be crucial that the people could also trust those to whom he delegated authority and responsibility. Finally, he advised Moses to select men who were not greedy or dishonest. If those types were selected, perhaps they would make judgment decisions based on who could pay them the most, as opposed to what was the wisest decision in the eyes of God. There is no indication that the order in which Jethro lists these qualities is indicative of their relative importance. It appears that all of them are important. Delegation of leadership should only go to those who are able, reverent, trustworthy, and honest.

In addition to advising Moses to select others so that some of his duties could be delegated to them, Jethro also gave advice regarding how these persons would be

organized. "Set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens."[10] This recommendation suggests that all of the newly created sub-leaders would not be on the same level. Perhaps some would be responsible for a group of ten. Five of those leaders would them answer to a higher leader, who would be responsible for a group of fifty. Perhaps two of those leaders would then answer to a higher leader who would be responsible for a group of one hundred. Perhaps ten of those leaders would then answer to an even higher leader who would be responsible for a group of a thousand. Although this passage should not be interpreted literally, as with this example, it does suggest a hierarchical organizational structure. As a result, Moses would have fewer direct reports, and would still be available to handle the weightier matters. Jethro suggests that this reorganization would not only take a load off of Moses, but the people will also be able to return home sooner than later.

We must understand that while we see God's church as a live organism, it must be properly organized in order to function at its maximum capacity. During Moses' day, the people had grown to a point that having Moses as the only leader was no longer an effective organizational structure for the organism—the people of Israel. Therefore, a more elaborate organizational structure was necessary.

Moses not only listened to his father-in-law, but he also fully took his advice. He chose able men from all of Israel, and put them in charge of groups of tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands. They were responsible for judging the easier, more routine cases, while Moses was still available to judge the harder, more difficult cases.

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[10] Ex 18:21.

Exegetical Analysis Of Acts 6:1-7

Historical Analysis

The book of Acts, formerly known as the Acts of the Apostles, is ascribed to Luke, who is also accepted as the author of the Gospel of Luke. The similarities in writing styles between the two books, and the fact that both are addressed to a person by the name of Theophilus help create this common authorship belief. "Standing between the Gospels and the Epistles, the book of Acts is a bridge between the life of Jesus and the ministry of the apostle Paul."[11] Although named the Acts of the Apostles, the book really records more of the acts of the Holy Spirit than actual Acts of the Apostles. Understanding how the early church grew, expanded, and evolved is a key component of the book of Acts.

The book of Acts was written around A.D. 62, and covers "a time span of about thirty-two years—from the ascension of Jesus (about A.D. 30) to Paul's imprisonment in Rome (about A.D. 62)."[12] Similar to the Gospel of Luke, this letter was written to Gentiles. According to Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, the book has three primary sections; 1) The Witness in Jerusalem (1:1-8:30; 2) The Witness in Judea and Samaria (8:4-12:25); and 3) The Witness to the End of the Earth (12:25-28:31). Acts covers the development of the early church, and shows how preaching and teaching of the word of God was crucial to the church's early development and rapid growth, and continues to serve as a model to today's church. The emphasis of preaching and teaching the word of God is just as important to the church today as it was during the days of the book of Acts.

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[11] Lockyer, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary.*

[12] Lockyer, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary.*

Similar to Moses' day, the disciples in the early church also experienced rapid growth. After the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2, many people were saved.

> Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.[13]

In addition, the disciples were able to perform many miracles. In Acts 3, Peter and John were going up to the temple at prayer time. They saw a man who had been lame from birth, and were able to heal him. The Bible says, "All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.[14] Acts 5 records that people believed that there was healing in Peter's shadow:

> Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.[15]

The disciples' preaching and teaching, and their ability to perform miracles caused tremendous growth in the body of Christ.

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[13] Acts 2:38–41.

[14] Acts 3:9–10.

[15] Acts 5:14–16.

Detailed Analysis

Another important factor in the growth of the early church was the boldness and clear authority that the disciples had been given from God. When two persons, Ananias and Sapphira, lied about possessions that they had sold for the benefit of the church, the Spirit of God killed them both. This left the people in awe. In addition, when the authorities arrested and threatened the disciples about teaching and healing in the name of Jesus, the disciples demonstrated great boldness, and refused to stop preaching, teaching and healing in the name of Jesus. The boldness of their actions also led to much growth in the church.

Although growth is usually good, it also comes with its share of problems. As the church continued to grow, complaints arose. According to Acts 6:1, the Hellenists complained because their widows were being neglected. Hellenists were Greek speaking Jews. Others spoke Aramaic. It is interesting that there was a perceived (if not actual) bias against a group of people based on language. The Greek word for complained really means murmured. Therefore, it appears that, as opposed to an overt level of complaining and protest, the disciples became aware of an undercurrent of dissatisfaction. Although the complaining may not have been overt, they recognized that it could nevertheless be damaging to the move of Christianity and the unit of the body of Christ.

> As the church increased and came to include more and more of these "Hellenist" converts, it is only natural that they would have formed close associations with one another, perhaps even meeting in home fellowships together. There is no reason to picture a breach or separation in the total Christian community—only the sort of "distancing" created by natural linguistic and cultural differences.[16]

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[16] J. B. Polhill, *Acts*, vol. 26 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 179.

Therefore, the twelve called a community meeting and asserted that it would not be proper for them (the twelve) to neglect the study, preaching and teaching of the word of God in order to distribute food. The implication of this statement is at least two-fold. First, the twelve are suggesting that if they did perform the food distribution, it would be done fairly and equitably. Secondly, and most importantly, they are also implying that help is needed. There was no denying the fact that the early church's reputation and witness would have been severely if not permanently damaged if one of it's main goals of providing for the needs of all would have been neglected. The responsibility of taking care of widows was especially important during this day:

> In Jewish society widows were particularly needy and dependent, and the Old Testament singles them out along with orphans as the primary objects of charitable deeds. The Hellenist widows may have been a particularly sizable group. Diaspora Jews often moved to Jerusalem in their twilight years to die in the holy city. When the men died, their widows were left far from their former home and family to care for them and were thus particularly in need of charity. Many of them may have been attracted to the Christian community precisely because of its concern for the material needs of its members.[17]

Gaventa points out, "Because most women spent their lives in households that belonged to their fathers and then their husbands, they controlled little property and had little economic opportunity. When widowed, they were particularly vulnerable economically and socially."[18] Numerous scriptures show how important it was that society cared for the needs of its widows. For example, Exodus 22:22-24 says:

> You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans.[19]

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[17] Polhill, *Acts,* 179.

[18] D. G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 230.

[19] Ex 22:22–24.

Deuteronomy 24:19-21 says:

> When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings. When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.[20]

In addition to taking care of the widows, the early church was known in general for how it cared for the needs of all people. Referring back to the pericope of Annanias and Saphirra, the people of that day would sell all of their possessions and lay them at the apostles' feet. The apostles, then, would be responsible for ensuring that everyone's needs were met from this common treasury. According to Acts 4:34-35:

> There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.[21]

Some of the early church's activities were not just based on spiritual or church norms. Some were based on the needs of society. As the church gained influence and numbers, they also took on the responsibility of being a good community partner.

> In the synagogue, there was a routine custom. Two collectors went round the market and the private houses every Friday morning and made a collection for the needy, partly in money and partly in goods. Later in the day, this was distributed. Those who were temporarily in need received enough to enable them to carry on; and those who were permanently unable to support themselves received enough for fourteen meals, that is, enough for two meals a day for the week ahead. The fund from which this distribution was made was called the *Kuppah*, or basket. In addition to this, a house-to-house collection was made daily for those whose needs were pressing. This was called the *Tamhui*, or tray. It is clear that the Christian Church had taken over this custom.[22]

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[20] Dt 24:19–21.

[21] Acts 4:34–35.

[22] W. Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 58.

While some theologians suggest that the apostle's response indicated that they were never involved in the distribution of food, others believe their response indicated that they were indeed involved in the distribution of food, and, as a result, were doing too much.

> The Apostles studied the situation and concluded that *they* were to blame: they were so busy serving tables that they were neglecting prayer and the ministry of the Word of God. They had created their own problem because they were trying to do too much. Even today, some pastors are so busy with secondary tasks that they fail to spend adequate time in study and in prayer. This creates a "spiritual deficiency" in the church that makes it easy for problems to develop.[23]

Regardless of which view one believes, it is clear that help is needed to carry out the mandate of God. The idea of spiritual deficiency is very real, and is created by lack of focus on the spiritual. The story of Mary and Martha immediately comes to mind. As Jesus visited with the two sisters, one (Mary) sat at Jesus' feet while the other (Martha) performed domestic duties to support Jesus' visit. When Martha complained to Jesus because she felt that Mary was not pulling her share of the load, Jesus replied by telling Martha that she was encumbered about with much worrying. Although He never suggested that what Martha was doing was not important, He clearly stated that what Mary was doing (i.e., sitting at His feet) was the most needed. So often, as pastors and spiritual leaders, we spend time on matters that may be important, but not as important as prayer and study of the word of God.

When the twelve said in verse 2 that they should not neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables, the word wait is actually translated from the Greek word diakonia, which means to serve or minister. The twelve further state in verse 4 that they would devote themselves to prayer and to serving the word. The word serving is actually

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[23] W. W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary,* vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 429.

translated from the same Greek word, diakonia. In other words, the twelve are saying that instead of ministering by serving food, they will minister by serving the Word. This suggests that both are vital needs of the people, and vital responsibilities of the church. However, the twelve recognized that they could not meet both vital needs.

The new tier of leadership would be selected based on the needs of the early church, not the needs or gifts of the individuals to be selected. It is important that church leaders understand that their role is to be there to meet the needs of the body, instead of the body being there to meet their needs. Often in today's church society we encounter people who start a ministry because of their need to be significant, as opposed to the significance of the need.

The apostles apparently recognized that the status quo could not continue. Without some type of adjustment, the early church would have possibly split into two groups—the Greek-speaking Jews in one group and the Hebrew-speaking Jews in another group. Also, without carefully handling the selection of leaders, a group split could still occur. Many churches in today's society end up splitting into two or more groups either because needed change is ignored, or is handled the wrong way. The early church apostles clearly wanted to avoid such an occurrence.

As opposed to the Exodus pericope where Moses, the leader, selects the second tier of leaders, the disciples tell the people to select their own second tier of leadership. "Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task."[24]

> No longer did they put it to the lot, and although they could have made the choice themselves, moved as they were by the Spirit, they wanted the testimony of the

[24] Acts 6:3.

> people. Determining the number, ordaining the chosen and other such business rested with them, but the choice itself they entrusted to the people, so as not to give the appearance of showing favor.[25]

Acts 6 gives us a completely different model of selecting leaders, as compared to Exodus 18. In the Old Testament pericope, Moses selects the second tier of leaders. Here in Acts 6, the people select the second tier of leaders, who are then confirmed by the apostles. In the Old Testament pericope, there is no mention of the people complaining about the slow process. However, the complaints of the Grecian widows are apparent in the New Testament pericope. Perhaps the complaints of the people are a reason why they were included in the leadership selection process. By allowing the people to select their own leaders, perhaps they would be more willing to follow their leadership, and would be less likely to complain. The fact that all seven leaders were Greek speaking is also quite interesting. These two variations show that there is no one true way of selecting leaders, and that the selection process should be based in part on the local context. By selecting the next tier of leaders, the disciples ensured that their time would be dedicated to the word of God, while ensuring that the needs of the people were being met.

This pericope shows the importance of responding to necessary change in the church. Here, the early church was able to respond to a clearly identified need. The apostles were not concerned with the status quo. They were concerned with meeting the needs of the people.

> The church was not afraid to adjust their structure in order to make room for a growing ministry. When structure and ministry conflict, this gives us an opportunity to trust God for the solution. It is tragic when churches destroy ministry because they refuse to modify their structure. The Apostles were not afraid to share their authority and ministry with others.[26]

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[25] F. Martin & E. Smith, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 70.

[26] Wiersbe, *The Bible exposition commentary*, 429.

One of the problems with today's church is the reluctance to change, even when it is clear that change is needed. Although many call themselves senior pastors, many churches function without any junior pastors. The need to delegate authority and share leadership is often thwarted by leaders who are insecure or who lack the understanding of how shared leadership blesses them and the congregation that they serve. The apostles in this pericope present a model that many others should follow. However, it must be noted again that the change really did not begin with the apostles, but with the people, whose complaining was the impetus for change. At least the apostles were sensitive to their complaints.

Similar to the Exodus pericope, certain standards were identified for the selection of the seven men. They were to be men of good standing. The Greek word from which the words good standing is translated actually mean men for whom others could bear witness that they were well respected. They were also to be men who were full of the spirit, and men who were full of wisdom. It is clear from both pericopes that standards for leaders should be set before leaders are chosen.

Based on the suggestion of the disciples, the people selected Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolau. According to one commentary, "all the names in the list are Greek, which means that all the appointed deacons (Luke does not actually use the title) are Hellenists."[27] The list of names seems to correspond to the amount of information we know about each of the seven. We know most about Stephen, who was the first martyr of the early church. Philip, also known as Philip the Evangelist,

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[27] H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, E. J. Epp & C. R. Matthews, eds., J. Limburg, A. T. Kraabel, & D. H. Juel, trans. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), 45.

was known for his preaching and teaching in Samaria. Beyond that, we do not know much about most of the individual selections. However, we can assume that they were men of good standing, and full of the spirit and wisdom, which were the original selection criteria.

Although the people selected the men, the disciples installed them. The men stood before the disciples, who laid hands on them and prayed. "The practice of laying hands on others was a gesture signifying commissioning and granting of authority."[28]

As a result of the creation of this second tier of leadership, the word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples increased, and many priests became obedient to the faith. In other words, the selection of additional leaders was a blessing to all.

Reflections

Both pericopes show that as the body of believers grew, there was a need to reconsider the leadership and organizational structure that support the body of Christ. One leader, or even a small group of leaders, may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the people. Sometimes the need may be recognized in a passive way, such as the observance of an objective evaluator, or in a demonstrative way, such as complaining members. Regardless of how the need is identified, it is important that the needs for leadership re-organization are adequately addressed.

In the case of the Old Testament pericope, Moses' father-in-law first recognizes the need for additional leadership. There is no record of complaint from the people, although the people and Moses were obviously weary from the process. Moses selects

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[28] S. D. Toussaint, Acts, In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 367.

additional leaders, based on pre-established criteria. The leaders are selected, and the process of judging disputes between people is shared with the larger leadership group.

In the case of the New Testament pericope, the twelve apostles received word of complaints from the Grecian widows that they were being neglected, or overlooked in the daily distribution of food. The apostles decided that their primary responsibility was to administer the Word of God to the people, not food. Therefore, they assembled the people and gave them instructions to select their own leaders, based on pre-established criteria. The selected leaders (in this case, seven), were then installed by the apostles. The scripture records that the church continued to grow and flourish.

There are similarities and differences between the two pericopes. They both had a clear need for more leadership. They both were experiencing a growing population of people. They both responded to the need by taking definitive action. They both established clear criterion for the new leaders prior to selecting the new leaders. The action taken by both resulted in an improved environment, and more satisfied people.

However, the two groups of people were different in how they handled the issue. One group complained while the other group appeared to be somewhat passive. The top leader selected one group of second tier leaders, while the people selected the other group of second tier leaders. One group (Old Testament) not only selected new leaders, but also created a modified hierarchical organization structure, while the other group (New Testament) seemed to only add the additional layer of leadership.

Clearly, there is no one right way to select second tier leaders. However, it is clear from these two pericopes that when the need arose to select more leaders, the current leadership must be willing to respond accordingly. Selection criteria must be established

up front, and a selection strategy, based on the local context, must be implemented. When this is done appropriately, the church is in a position to not only survive, but also thrive.

Today's church needs to pay closer attention to the early church and even the Old Testament church (although not referred to as a church in that day) to see how they handled obvious needs for developing additional leadership. Particularly in the African American church, the senior pastor is tasked with too many responsibilities. In addition to preaching and teaching, many pastors have to do most of or all the sick visitation, church administration, burying the dead, performing weddings, dedicating homes, and the list goes on and on. Many of these pastors eventually experience burnout, which causes some to leave the ministry, and causes others to have health challenges or unbalanced lives. In addition, many churches cannot grow to the God-given capacity and cannot reach their God-required ministry capacity because of the leadership void that exists below the senior pastor level. Consequently, many churches perhaps settle for where they are without realizing the amount of untapped potential that exists within their ministry context.

Even newer ministers are indoctrinated into thinking that unless they one day become senior pastors, their ministries are somehow junior to those who are senior pastors. As a result, many ministers who could develop or utilize their skills to assist in established ministries often leave to start their own churches. Consequently, the African American communities end up having numerous storefront, small churches that do not have the economies of scale to do effective ministry on a large scale. Those ministers who do not leave to start their own churches remain in ministries where they are underutilized, and feel as if God has given them a limited calling.

Sustainable churches need a strong second tier of leadership. It appears that Jethro knew that Moses would eventually burnout if he did not get some help. Although we know that God is always able, one could only imagine what would have happened to Israel if Moses experienced severe burnout. Similarly, one could ask what would have happened to the early church if the apostles had not reorganized at that critical time where divisions were beginning to show up. Today's African American church can learn a lesson from these two passages of scripture. We can perhaps lessen the burnout of the senior pastor and provide a better path of leadership succession if we embrace the principles employed in the Word of God. We can also better ensure that our churches will not just survive, but thrive. People who are currently on the church rolls will discover new opportunities to use their gifts and graces for the glory of and Kingdom of God. Ministers who currently feel that their calling from God hinges on a Sunday morning preaching opportunity will realize that there are so many other ways to serve God, serve people, and fulfill the calling that is truly on their lives.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The title of this DMin project is "Developing Lay Leadership for Effective Service in Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church." The essence of this topic is to look at ways to develop the local church's leadership team just below the level of the senior pastor. It has been my experience at my church and others that many African American churches rely heavily on the senior pastor for the overall health, growth, and development of the church, its congregants, and its ministries. As soon as the pastor leaves, retires, gets sick, or dies, too many of our African American churches struggle during and beyond the leadership transition. The development of second tier leaders such as staff ministers, deacons, stewards and trustees will greatly assist the senior pastor in leading the church, and will support the church during times of leadership transition.

To look at this issue from a historical perspective, I have chosen to examine the life and ministry of John Wesley. John Wesley is often called the founder of the Methodist movement. History reveals that it was not Wesley's intent to form a new denomination, as he was committed to the Anglican Church. However, his desire to foster the develop of Christians who would have a sincere commitment to living out their Christian faith led him to establish and organize this movement into what has evolved

into what we now know as the Methodist denomination.

Research on John Wesley clearly shows how important selecting other leaders and developing a model of shared leadership is to any movement. The fact that today's Methodist church is one of the most organized denominations is no mere accident, and can be directly linked to some of John Wesley's decisive actions in creating an organization and delegating leadership.

John Wesley had an incredible zeal for what he was doing. In many instances, a leader's (or in our case a pastor's) zeal can be the very reason why there is a reluctance to expand the leadership circle. If John Wesley's zeal had prevented him from sharing leadership with others, it is doubtful that the Methodist movement would have been successful, and he would not be considered as one of the fathers of the early church movement. It is crucial that today's pastors and religious leaders do not allow their zeal to keep them from enlisting others to help carry the load. Many will find that there are others who can be just as passionate about God's work and assignment as they are, if given the opportunity to demonstrate it.

As a leader, John Wesley demonstrated the ability to lead as well as the ability to follow. In addition, he demonstrated the ability to participate in shared leadership with his peers. He had the ability to transform his role based on the needs of the situation. A leader must be able to understand the role and importance of follow ship as well as leadership. A leader must embrace models of shared leadership, when necessary.

In this foundation, I will show how John Wesley transitioned from being a follower/apprentice at times, to being a leader at other times, to being a part of a leadership team at still other times. The reader should note that there is no intended

progression in listing these three leadership roles. Instead, the importance that should be gleaned is that a true leader must embrace each role at different times, given the need and the circumstances.

As an African Methodist Episcopal pastor, selecting John Wesley as my historical figure has enlightened my understanding of why we as AME's do some of the things that we do. It has also enlightened me to understand that some of the methods employed by Wesley were based strictly on his context, and that the contextual nature of his ministry is in many ways significantly different from what we find today. Consequently, some of the Wesleyan processes that we employ today are ineffective because we do not clearly understand why Wesley did some of what he did. If we better understand his focus and intent, we will be in a position to decipher between techniques and methodologies that should not be employed just because they are traditional, when they are no longer effectual.

First, we will look briefly at the life of John Wesley. Then we will examine how he followed leadership and guidance, and how he shared leadership when appropriate. Finally, we will look at how he developed leaders at lower levels in order to expand his vision of Christianity in England and the United States. Finally, I will reflect on the impact of John Wesley in today's Methodist Church organization.

The Life of John Wesley

John Wesley was born in 1703, and was the fifteenth of nineteen children born to Revered Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna. As the son of a preacher, he was raised in a very devout household where religious values were taught at a very early age. "Every

week she [Susanna Wesley] made time for religious instruction for each child separately."[1] One of John Wesley's brothers was Charles Wesley, who worked closely with him in what we now know as the Methodist movement.

Although John was raised in a stable, Christian home, he was never able to replicate that kind of life in his own marriage and family. It is believed by some that the influence of his mother was so strong, that he could never find another woman that could satisfy his heart. "So profound was the influence of Susanna Wesley upon her son John Wesley that she has been called The Mother of Methodism."[2] It was a failed romantic relationship in Georgia with a young woman named Sophy Hopkey that finally led him to return to England. When Ms. Hopkey ended the relationship with Wesley and moved on to another relationship, Wesley refused to perform the wedding ceremony, which created an uproar leading to his departure. His only marriage was to a woman by the name of Mary Vazeille. The marriage was an utter failure because of John's intense commitment to the Christian movement. He did not make time for his marriage, which should be a lesson to all clergy. I found no record of John Wesley having any children.

Ironically, the fact that Wesley did not have much romantic success with women did not lesson the importance of women in the Christian movement. He was ahead of his time in acknowledging the fact that God can equally use women as he uses men. "For Wesley women had equal stature to men in God's eyes. He used women in his work, and he elaborated on the special service of women who dies doing good for the poor and for

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[1] Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language: Updated 2nd Edition* (Plain Language Series) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Kindle Edition, 333).

[2] "John Wesley and Women," *Christianity Today/Church History Magazine*, 1983.

prisoners."[3]

John Wesley was also highly educated. At seventeen he was off to Oxford University where he studied first at Christ Church and later at Lincoln College. "He found little at Oxford to stimulate his mind or his soul, but he read widely and was especially impressed by the early church fathers and the great devotional classics."[4]

John Wesley was also ordained as an Anglican priest at an early age, and was a member of a group called the Holy Club, along with his brother, Charles. Similar to the name Methodists, others initially considered the term Holy Club a derogatory term ascribed to them. The Holy Club was a group of college students who were devout in their dedication to prayer, fasting, and reading the bible. His early involvement with this group helped fuel his passion for holy living. Wesley felt that Christians should live out their faith.

Subsequently, John and Charles Wesley went to Georgia, which had been colonized by England, to evangelize Native Americans. However, they were not very successful in their efforts to evangelize Native Americans, and ended up spending more time evangelizing some of the colonists. However, they eventually returned to England after realizing their approach to holiness and the colonists did not readily embrace piety.

Enroute to America, John Wesley did encounter the true faith of the Moravians. During a storm on the ocean where Wesley thought he would die, he noticed the calmness of the Moravians, who were praying and singing while others were in panic. Inquisitive about their show of faith, Wesley became a student of the Moravian Christians.

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[3] "John Wesley and Women."

[4] Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* (New York, NY: Word Publishing, 1995), 333.

"Later that summer Wesley visited the Moravians in their Saxon homeland. He wanted to see firsthand the power of the piety he had witnessed aboard ship and in Georgia."[5]

After returning to England, John Wesley began to preach in partnership with George Whitefield, who was a traveling preacher known for preaching outside in open-air environments. An Anglican by upbringing, Wesley was not accustomed to preaching outside of a church building, but soon got used to it, and was successful. As the word spread, so did the people. Completely unplanned, John Wesley eventually developed a new denomination although he never officially left the Anglican Church.

John Wesley, The Follower

In order to understand the importance of being a good leader, one must also be an effective follower when the situation calls for follow-ship. John Wesley had experience as a good follower. As a child, he learned to submit to very strict parents who taught him and his siblings strong religious values. He learned as a student at Oxford University. In Georgia, he was under the leadership of General James Oglethorpe.

When he returned to England from America, John Wesley had to follow the lead of a younger preacher named George Whitefield. Whitefield had begun preaching outside because the Anglican Church had banned him from preaching in many of the churches. As an ordained Anglican preacher, Wesley initially rejected the notion of preaching outside. However, because so many people were becoming saved through this type of preaching venue, Wesley eventually followed by assisting Whitefield.

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[5] Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 336.

> When the hardened miners of Bristol pled for God's mercy in such great numbers Whitefield urged Wesley to follow his lead into the open fields. John knew he was no match for Whitefield's oratory. He spoke as an Oxford scholar and a gentleman. But he hesitated chiefly because he had never dreamed of preaching under the sky. "Having been all my life so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order," he wrote, "I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."[6]

John Wesley, The Shared Leader

Perhaps recognized more than his brother as the founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley in many ways shared leadership with others, including his younger brother, Charles. Although John eventually led the college group called the Holy Club, it was his brother Charles who was the founder and initial leader of the group. John was in many ways in partnership with his brother Charles during their time in Georgia. Although their mission to evangelize was not very successful, they nevertheless worked in tandem to spread the gospel. Realizing their lack of success, Charles, the older brother, returned to England first. However, John was determined to make his ministry in Georgia work. However, he continued to be unsuccessful. "As a pastor, he failed miserably, for he expected his parishioners to behave like the holy club, and his flock expected him to be content with their attendance at worship."[7] Eventually, John also returned to England, and began to work in partnership with another preacher.

John Wesley developed a ministry relationship with a preacher by the name of George Whitefield. George Whitefield, who was younger than Wesley, had become a successful preacher, both in Georgia and also in England. Whitefield and Wesley had

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[6] Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 337.

[7] Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Reformation to the Present Day,* vol. 2 (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010), Kindle Locations 4152-4153.

previously known each other, and were both a part of the Holy Club while in college. Whitefield was known as a fiery preacher, who eventually offended some of the more traditional churchmen of his day. As a result, Whitefield was banned from preaching in many pulpits.

Whitefield began preaching outside, since he was often banned from preaching inside of sanctuaries. His open air, fiery delivery style caught on like wild fire, and many souls were converted under his preaching. He became so successful that he asked John Wesley to assist him in preaching to growing crowds. Wesley was initially apprehensive about this, because Wesley did not totally agree with open air preaching, and Wesley was not in favor of Whitefield's fiery style of preaching. However, given the fact that up to that point Wesley had not had a great deal of success in his own ministry, he eventually saw it as an opportunity to preach and further the gospel.

Together, Whitefield and Wesley's open air preaching drew many souls to Christ. Although they were in partnership, they did have some serious theological differences. The primary theological difference revolved around the subject of predestination. Whitefield believed in the Calvinistic belief of predestination, while Wesley believed in Arminianism. Eventually, the two decided to part ways, but also agreed to avoid conflicts between each other and their respective beliefs.

What is very important in both of Wesley's partnerships mentioned above was his ability to adapt to whatever role was necessary at the time. In the case of his brother, John was the younger of the two, and became a member of the Holy Club organization that his brother initially led. However, John eventually became the leader of the group because he was the only one who was ordained. In the case of George Whitefield, John had to accept

the fact that the younger Whitefield had the more successful ministry, while John had failed by that time. Wesley also had to accept Whitefield's style of preaching and ministry, although it did not exactly line up with Wesley's own personal beliefs about how worship should be conducted. Over time, John Wesley became the leader of that movement, and today is more highly regarded in history than lesser-known George Whitefield.

In order to be an effective leader, one must know how to share leadership. In a shared leadership model, one must respect the roles being played by each person who shares leadership. One must also be adaptable, and able to adjust as situations dictate the need to alter one's respective role. John Wesley demonstrated the ability to share leadership, assume his specific responsibility, and adjust his role as needed by changing circumstances.

John Wesley, The Leadership Developer

John Wesley's preaching ministry grew exponentially as a result of his partnership with George Whitefield. The size of the crowds that came out to hear his preaching continued to grow. "He preached to over 3,000 in the open air and the reaction of these common folk was amazing."[8] The demand from those desiring to hear him preach continued to increase.

> In his diary for 28 June 1774, Wesley claims that his minimum mileage per year was 4,500. That means he must have traveled in his lifetime 250,000 miles, ten times around the world! He traveled mostly on horseback, and he soon learned to give the horse plenty of rein so that he could read a book or prepare a sermon on his way to the next town.[9]

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[8] Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 337.

[9] Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 337.

As a result of this phenomenal ministry expansion, Wesley realized that he could not manage this growing movement without proper organization and without the enlistment of other tiers of leadership. It is important to keep in mind that, at this time, it was still not Wesley's intent to form a new denomination or a formal organization. His desire was simply to spread the gospel and to give the people a structure in which to live out their Christian faith. Since he did not see these new groups of Christian believers as churches, he organized them into what were called societies. Most of the members of these societies were still members of the Church of England, so the societies were primarily vehicles used for social interaction and fellowship within the Christian faith.

The newly created societies were responsible for sharing the word of God, sharing of testimonies, singing, and worship, other than the administration of communion, which could only be done by ordained clergy. It was not long before John Wesley realized that he could not physically travel to all of these societies to preach and teach. In one instance, he discovered that there was a non-ordained layperson that was preaching and teaching in one of the societies. He initially decided to attend the society meeting to expel the layperson that was teaching without permission. However, his mother encouraged him to go and hear the lay preacher for himself.

> When Wesley heard that layman Thomas Maxfield had been preaching in one of the societies in London, he planned to put a stop to it. But his mother, Susanna, asked him to hear the man before making a decision, and Maxfield so impressed Wesley that he decided that the use of lay preachers was God's answer to the movement's urgent need for preachers.[10]

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[10] Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Kindle Locations 4209-4212.

As a result of what he heard, not only did Wesley not expel the person, but he commissioned him to continue to preach and teach as a layperson. This began the concept of the lay preacher, which stills exists in the Methodist church.

By this time, John Wesley had created at least a second tier of leadership through the implementation of societies. He has introduced the concept of the lay preacher, and has enlisted the help of some ordained Anglican clergy to assist with communing the people. However, all of this had been done to support a movement, not a new church or organization.

One of the key Anglican priests that supported him in this movement was his brother, Charles Wesley. To assist the society gatherings in their worship, Charles began to write many hymns, which were first sung at these society gatherings. Charles Wesley wrote many of the beloved hymns of the church, which are sung today, during these early society gatherings.

The popularity of the societies and the society gatherings continued to increase. John Wesley soon realized that the number of people attending the societies was too large to manage. Therefore, he created another subdivision of the society called the class. The people in each society were divided into groups usually of eleven people, plus one leader who was called the class leader. Although the original purpose of the classes was believed to be the collection of offerings from each member, the classes became weekly meetings of the members of each class. In the class meetings, members were encouraged and strengthened in their individual Christian walk, and received support from the members of the class when necessary.

The creation of the class system created another tier of leadership called the class leaders. Since class leaders did not have to be wealthy or highly educated, it opened a new avenue for many people to assume a leadership role, which did not exist in the Church of England. Being a class leader became a very prestigious and sought after role for many commoners. Some of the classes were made up of only women, and had women class leaders. The idea of having women in positions of leadership in the church as we know it today may have originated with this concept of women class leaders during John Wesley's day.

> Since, in order to be a class leader, it was not necessary to be wealthy or educated, this gave significant participation to many who felt left out of the structure of the Church of England. Also, since there were classes for women, under feminine leadership, this also gave women a prominent place in Methodism.[11]

Eventually, women were allowed to preach as lay preachers within the societies. Although they were not allowed to be ordained, they were at that time being used in this new movement in ways that they would not have been allowed within the Church of England. Today, the Methodist church denomination is considered to be perhaps the most progressive denomination in regards to permitting and promoting women preachers. The United Methodist Church elected and consecrated its first female bishop in 1980. The African Methodist Episcopal Church elected and consecrated its first female bishop in 2000. In comparison, the Church of England, John Wesley's original church, did not choose its first female bishop until 2015.

As has been noted above, the system of classes, societies, and circuits were all creations of the Wesleyan movement. These organizational structures predated what we now know as the church. Wesley created these structures for a particular purpose. During

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[11] Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Kindle Locations 4195-4201.

a time where there were no airplanes, telephones, or Internet, these systems allowed people to stay in communication and connection with each other. However, we see little change in these structures today, although we have had many advances in travel and communication technology. The current AME Book of Discipline describes classes and societies in the same manner as was prescribed by John Wesley over two hundred years ago. The class is still expected to consist of at least twelve people. One of the purposes of the class is "to receive what they contribute to the support of the Gospel."[12] However, we now live in an age of electronic giving, which makes the collection of offerings at class meetings obsolete. According to the disciple band societies are still "to meet once a week at least."[13] However, I am not aware of the existence of any band societies in the AME Church. Again, John Wesley established leadership and organizational structure based on the needs of his time. Today's church has failed in many ways to adapt to changes in the broader society.

As the continued growth of the movement required Wesley to create at least two lower tiers of leadership (lay preachers at the societies and class leaders over the classes), he realized that further organization and the creation of additional tiers of leadership were still necessary. He grouped some societies into what were called circuits, and organized societies and circuits into what were called annual conferences. It is interesting to note that in many of today's Methodist denominations, including the African Methodist Episcopal Church, some churches are still organized into circuits. At the annual conference, Wesley would assign certain preachers to preach at certain churches until the

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[12] *AME Book of Discipline* (Nashville, TN: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2012).

[13] *AME Book of Discipline.*

next annual conference. The practice of assigning pastors to churches is still a key component to today's annual conferences.

In an attempt to avoid further scrutiny from the Church of England, John Wesley created a position called Superintendent in order for someone else to take authority over the ordination and assignment of preachers to circuits and societies.

> In 1784, he ordained two lay preachers as presbyters for the new country, and made Anglican priest Thomas Coke their superintendent— a word that he well knew had the same meaning as the Greek word translated as bishop. Later, he ordained others to serve also in Scotland and elsewhere.[14]

Although he tried to avoid conflict with the Church of England by using the title Superintendent instead of Bishop, by this time it was clear that he would not be able to maintain a harmonious relationship with the Church of England. They saw his progressive movements as direct competition with the established church. Even his brother, Charles, recognized that the split at this point was unavoidable:

> In spite of having taken these steps, Wesley continued insisting on the need to avoid breaking with the Church of England. His brother Charles told him that the ordination of ministers for the New World was in itself a break.[15]

Today's United Methodist Church still employs the position of superintendent. However, the position now is considered to be a middle manager role between the pastor and the Bishop. The African Methodist Episcopal Church utilizes this same position, which is called Presiding Elder, instead of Superintendent.

As a result of simply trying to support a movement of Christians who are more focused on living out their faith while maintaining their membership in the Church of England, John Wesley had in effect created a new church denomination. The

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[14] Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Kindle Locations 4243-4245.

[15] Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Kindle Locations 4245-4246.

establishment of the annual conference system basically connected individual groups of persons attending weekly class meetings into something much larger. All of a sudden, they were now connected. Hence, their organizational structure was often called a connection. In the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the term connection is still used prominently in the church to refer to the whole church. Terms such as international or world-wide are seldom used to identify the denomination in its entirety. Instead, it is the word "connection" or "connectional" that is used widely within AME ranks to identify all who are a part of this particular denomination.

Although he had no apparent desire to create an organization or start a new church, John Wesley did have a desire to make sure that a movement that he started would continue to survive and thrive. To make that happen, he knew he would have to create an organizational structure even though there was no formal organization, as we see organizations in today's times. He knew that he could not sustain the growing movement on his own. Therefore he found help. He created other positions of leadership not just for the sake of position, but also for the sake of fulfilling purpose.

In developing additional leaders, Wesley clearly selected some leaders himself, such as other Anglican priests to perform communion, and the Superintendents who would eventually ordain preachers and appoint them to circuits. However, he allowed other leaders to be selected by their peers, such as many of the class leaders, and some of the lay leaders who taught and preached at the society gatherings. John Wesley in some cases followed the Exodus 18 model where the leader selected the sub-leaders. However, in other cases he seemed to have followed the Acts 6 model where people were allowed to select their own leaders. Regardless of which model was employed, it was very

apparent that the development of additional tiers of leadership was instrumental in the growth of the Wesleyan movement. The continued growth of this movement became a threat to the church establishment in England. Although he never formally left the Church of England, history shows that what Wesley did was the impetus for what is now known as the Methodist denomination.

Beyond England, the Methodist movement in the United States is undeniable. Utilizing the same organizational approach of societies, circuits, classes, and annual conferences, many people in the new land were saved. This movement was responsible for coming against slavery in the United States. Their appeal to the common, non-aristocratic people of the United States was clear. Opportunities for lay leaders expanded the leadership base in this movement, which allowed more people to participate in and be responsible for the movement's growth and success.

John Wesley was clearly ahead of his time in leadership development. However it appears that most of his leadership development was based on necessity. It is interesting to note that in todays' society where there is a true need for leadership development and organizational change, many leaders either do not recognize the need, or choose to stay with the status quo. One could only imagine what would have happened to John Wesley's movement if he did not have the courage to change and grow.

Conclusion

Although John Wesley set out to start a movement and not a church organization, the process that he went through in the formation of his movement shows the importance of developing tiers of leadership, even when the vision of the movement may initially rest

and reside in the heart and mind of one person. Wesley was driven by purpose, and allowed the needs of the movement to dictate what the organizational structure and leadership would look like.

In his early years, Wesley learned the importance of following leadership. As a young child, he was raised under very strict leadership provided by his mother and father. Devout Christians, they taught him the importance of discipline and education. He later followed the leadership of General James Oglethorpe in Georgia, as well as a younger minister by the name of George Whitefield. He even followed the leadership of his brother, Charles, in the Holy Club organization.

John Wesley also understood the importance of shared leadership and how leadership roles need to evolve with changing times and situations. His partnership in ministry with his brother Charles and George Whitefield underscore his appreciation of shared leadership. As situations changed, John went from being their followers to their leaders in many respects.

As the Christian movement now known as the Methodist denomination continued to grow, John Wesley knew he couldn't do it all by himself. Therefore he organized different layers of participation, and allowed for leaders to manage those respective layers. In some cases he chose the leaders while in other cases he allowed the people to select leaders from their peer group. Again, he allowed the situation to dictate the process. Significant in this progression was the acceptance of women and common class people as leaders in the movement. This was very rare at the time within the Church of England.

What we now know as the Methodist denomination would perhaps never have been developed if it had not been for John Wesley's foresight in understanding that

leadership was something that was not to be owned, but shared. Similar to the Israelites in Exodus 18 and the early Christians in Acts 6, the entire body grew and flourished when the leadership span and model was influenced by the needs of the people, versus the needs of the leaders.

Today's pastors should review the Wesleyan model not just for theological purposes, but for organizational purposes. What pastors will find is that John Wesley's leadership model was inclusive, not exclusive. They will also find that his leadership model and structure evolved as the needs of the people evolved. In most of today's protestant churches, especially Methodist churches, the leadership model has remained the same for decades, even though there has been much change in how people travel, communicate and fellowship with each other.

Today's pastors will also discover that John Wesley created other tiers of leadership on purpose. He apparently knew that in order for the movement to survive his mortality, he had to involve and include others in the vision that God had given him. John Wesley died on March 2, 1791 at the age of eighty-seven. Although he has been gone for 225 years, the movement that he started has survived and thrived over the years thanks to his unselfish decision to create more leaders to carry out the vision.

Today it is time for the African American church to revisit its leadership structure. Many of our churches are more known by the name of its senior pastor that by its church name. Perhaps more people are familiar with the name T. D. Jakes than they are The Potter's House. Creflo Dollar's name is more familiar than World Changers. People are more familiar with the name Jamaal Bryant than they are Empowerment Temple. When these leaders fade away, what will happen to their ministries? The recent passing of

Bishop Eddie Long will give us the first part of the answer to this important question. Ironically, the Methodist movement that John Wesley founded is perhaps the organization that needs to revisit its leadership and organizational structure the most. As I mentioned earlier, our book of discipline still calls for the use of classes and societies in much the same way that John Wesley used them in the 1700's. Obviously, there are some changes that are needed. The same holds true in the local church setting. Pastors should organize and reorganize on purpose, not on position. The need for effective second tier leaders who are equipped, trained and anointed are needed today like never before.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The issue of equipping lay leaders for effective service in the faith community is not new. The question of who (clergy or laity) is ultimately responsible for the soteriological functions of the church has been pondered over time. However, over the recent past, it appears that leadership in the local church context has increasing become the responsibility of the senior pastor, as the laity has taken a back seat to participating in the overall leadership of the church. This phenomenon has had and will continue to have a devastating impact on the church and future church growth.

Before we take a closer look at this topic from various theological perspectives, one must begin by taking a look at the overall theology of lay (or non-clergy) leadership in the Kingdom of God. Since theology is defined as the study of God and His nature, it is important that we briefly reflect on God's Word, the bible, to see what scripture says about the relationship between what we today refer to as clergy leadership in relation to lay leadership. In Exodus 19, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, challenges Moses to find help in judging the people. Moses takes his father-in-law's advice, and the end result was that the people were timelier served, and Jethro obtained support and relief. In Acts 6, the Grecian widows, who felt that they were not being properly served, criticized the apostles. The apostles decided that their primary responsibility was to study and teach the Word of

God, not serve tables. Therefore, they found seven other people to help with the serving of the widows, which allowed them to focus exclusively on the Word of God. The result of that decision blessed the widows, and the Christian church continued to grow and prosper.

There are many other scriptures that show that leadership in God's Kingdom should not be hoarded by one or a few, but shared with many. Therefore, one may conclude that God's theology is a theology of shared leadership, or lay participation. However, many of today's churches appear to drift away from what God may have originally intended. "We simply cannot ignore the disunity that exists among the various churches of the world. For us Protestant types, the problem of disunity is especially bad, as our various communions are notorious for internal division and schism."[1] How has this happened? There are perhaps a myriad of reasons of how and why this has happened. Let's look at this matter from the view of several theological constructs.

Soteriology

The church has a soteriological responsibility to its members as well as to the larger community. The duty of leading people to Christ, or saving souls, is the primary role of the church. All that we do—singing, preaching, teaching, fellowship—is designed to lead people to make a decision to accept and follow Christ. Perhaps no other function of the local church is more important than this one. Just as most other institutions have a primary goal, so does the church. Banks are in the business of lending and managing

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[1] Jason E. Vickers, *Minding the Good Ground* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011), Kindle Locations 528-530.

money. Schools are in the business of educating people. Hospitals are in the business of making sick people well. The church's primary role is the saving of souls.

If we accept the premise that saving souls is the church's primary responsibility, then the question becomes who within the church is primarily responsible for this responsibility. Is it the pastor's responsibility, or is it a shared role between pastor and laity? It appears that in too many of today's churches, this responsibility is seen as that of the pastor's exclusively. Many parishioners believe that whether someone gets saved or not is a function of the quality of the sermon. Many laypersons look to the pulpit and the choir stands as the determinant, without considering the impact of the pew. Many laypersons blame the pastor for stagnant church growth, while not taking any responsibility themselves.

At the same time, many pastors also view the soul saving business as theirs alone. Sometimes pastors judge the success or failure of their sermon and entire ministry on the number of people who were saved or who joined the church. They often fail to find effective ways to engage the laity in the mission of saving souls.

Responsibility lies on both the clergy and the laity to develop a clearer understanding of the shared responsibility of leading people to Christ. The concept of the priesthood of all believers informs us that each of us has direct access to the father through prayer, and that we do not have to go through any other man to have access to God.

> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.[2]

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[2] 1 Peter 2:9.

Similarly, we can draw from this same concept the fact that each of us also has the ability and the responsibility to lead others to Christ. The church (pastor and laity) must develop a process to ensure that all are informed, enlightened, and equipped to carry out this God-given mandate.

Missiology

The local church as well as the church in general often struggles with defining its role in the larger society. While He was in the world, Jesus said in John 17:16 that He was not of the world. This "in the world but not of the world" concept is applicable to today's church. The key question becomes how does the church make sure that its role in the world effectively impacts that world? This is a question of the role of missions and mission work in the local church and beyond.

As is in the case of soteriology, the role of the clergy versus the role of the laity is often unclear in terms of carrying out the mission mandate. Within the structure of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, there is a subordinate organization (commonly referred to as a component) called the Women's Missionary Society. Carrying the word missionary in its name, this is the group that many AME's feel is primarily responsible for doing mission work, both in the local church context as well as throughout the denomination. What makes this interesting is the leadership of the organization. The African Methodist Episcopal Church is organized into twenty different geographical locations, called Episcopal Districts. At the connectional (or international) level of the AME Church, the Bishop's spouse is the head of the Women's Missionary Society of each Episcopal District. Traditionally, this spouse was a woman, as bishops had always

been men up until the July 2000 election of Bishop Vashti McKenzie, who became the first female bishop in the history of the denomination. Nevertheless, even now with male spouses, the Bishops' spouses lead the Women's Missionary Society.

What is significant about the Bishop's spouses leading the Women's Missionary Society is the fact that Bishops themselves have little to no involvement with this component organization. Similarly at the local church level, the pastor usually has little to no role with the local Women's Missionary Society, other than the role that the pastor's spouse sometimes plays. Since the pastor has virtually no leadership role within the Women's Missionary Society, and the Women's Missionary Society is the lead agency in most AME church mission efforts, the pastor basically has no leadership role in local AME church missionary efforts.

At this point, one may think that the laity in local AME churches embraces mission efforts, given that a lay group (Women's Missionary Society) takes primary responsibility for the mission work. However, that is usually not true. Although the Women's Missionary Society is comprised of a group of laywomen, it is usually a small subset of the entire laity of a local church congregation, and usually involves no men. As a result, the responsibility for lay leadership in carrying out the missiology function of the local AME church is usually lacking and very inadequate.

Ecclesiology

The structure of the AME Church, as well as most churches, has clear lines of demarcation between what duties are the responsibility of the clergy and what duties belong to the laity. Although either can perform most functions, church traditions

normally dictate lines of division. For example, lay preaching and lay ministry are actually permitted by the AME Book of Discipline. However, seldom will one experience a layperson giving a sermon on a Sunday morning.

Other than administering the sacraments, such as baptism and communion, there are very few if any other tasks within the local AME church that are held exclusively for the ordained clergy. However, you will seldom see a layperson teach bible study or bring the message, but they usually teach Sunday school class. Although laypersons serve as stewards and trustees, they will seldom be found chairing a board meeting. Normally, the pastor chairs the meetings of the steward and trustee boards. If he or she is out of town, the pastor will normally cancel or reschedule the meeting instead of allowing the vice chair to proceed in conducting the meeting.

Although the AME Church has a very detailed and planned organizational structure, the actual operations of the church show that the leadership is very clergy-centered, with ancillary involvement of the laity, or leadership involvement of the laity only in certain prescribed sub-groups. Therefore, there is limited shared leadership between the clergy and the laity.

Pneumatology

> From its inception, the church has been and is a charismatic community whose life depends entirely on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, through whom and by whom the church does everything that she does, including proclaiming the good news about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; assisting persons in repentance for sin; catechizing and baptizing new converts; praying and worshipping together; freely sharing resources within and without the community; and breaking bread together.[3]

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[3] Vickers, *Minding the Good Ground*, Kindle Locations 714-718.

"The Lord told me…" is a fairly common phrased used by pastors to convey to the congregation the direction and future plans of the church. The fact that the Holy Spirit leads the pastor in charting the course for the church is understandable. However, the pastor does not have exclusive rights to the unction of the Holy Spirit. The history of the church shows that God has poured out his Spirit on both clergy and laity for the benefit of the church and its growth and expansion. Referring to the Azusa Street Revival, Timothy Tennent writes:

> The revival lasted from April 1906 through the early months of 1909 and drew tens of thousands of people from all over the world, who came to witness the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during one of the three daily services. Over the three-year period the Azusa Street Mission could hardly contain the crowds as thousands found redemption in Jesus Christ and experienced what was known as a "second Pentecost." It is not surprising that when Seymour began to publish a newspaper to help spread his teachings in September 1906, his lead article in the inaugural edition was entitled, "Pentecost Has Come!" However, the movement was not yet called "Pentecostalism." In those early days it was known simply as "The Apostolic Faith," which also became the name for the newspaper Seymour published. Few realized just how profoundly the global church would be affected by this and similar revivals that were simultaneously and independently breaking out around the world.[4]

What role does the laity have in hearing from the Holy Spirit, especially as it relates to the future plans and vision of the church? Is there a role for shared leadership when it comes to seeking God's will for the church? What happens if the anointed vision of the pastor goes against the grain of the majority of the church members, who are also praying, fasting and trusting people? Whose "hearing" receives priority placement?

In addition to the focus on money and material possessions, the prosperity gospel theology tends to advocate a concept whereby only the pastor correctly and accurately

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[4] Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2007), Kindle Edition 164.

hears from God. Any opinion other than the pastor's is normally considered heresy, and is routinely treated as going against authority. How can the laity be equipped to provide leadership in the church without having a role in hearing from God for the benefit of the church? What happens when the pastor hears one thing from the Holy Spirit and a committed, spiritual lay member hears something different from the Holy Spirit? Which one is right, and which one is wrong? Could they both be right? How does the church sort through these differences or reconciles the two? Church leaders must grapple with these questions.

Black Liberation Theology

Given the fact that Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church is considered as a black church, and the fact that the AME church espouses Black liberation theology, I became interested in the writings and views of Dr. James Cone. Dr. James Cone is considered to be the father and creator of what is known as Black Liberation Theology. This fairly contemporary branch of Christian Theology focuses on the relationship between how God dealt with the oppressed in the Bible, and how God deals with oppression and racial discrimination of Blacks in America today. We shall spend some time exploring the major tenets of Black Liberation Theology. Afterwards, we shall consider whether or not the Black church itself engages in a form of oppression by sometimes limiting the use and voice of laypersons within the church.

James H. Cone, known as the founder of Black Liberation Theology, is an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He holds numerous earned and honorary degrees, including an earned PhD from Northwestern University. He has

authored numerous books and articles, and is a distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary, located in New York, New York.

Cone believes that the gospel, as traditionally taught in America, paints a portrait of a white Jesus, and a white religion, which in some ways alienates African American Christians. Traditional Christian theology, in his opinion, makes it difficult for African Americans to truly connect and relate to God and Jesus. What does God say about racism and oppression in general? Cone suggests that God, Jesus, and the bible have a lot to say about oppression. However, the ways in which the bible has been taught does not adequately address the issue. Cone believes that God sides with the oppressed. In the gospel of Luke 4:18, Jesus reads from Isaiah's scroll: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free." Cone believes that this and other passages clearly demonstrate Jesus' concern for the poor and oppressed.

Cone also believes that Jesus not only relates to the poor and oppressed, but that He actually sides with them. African Americans and others who are oppressed have Jesus on their side. Just as He defeated Satan and sin by dying on the cross, the oppressed can have hope because of the resurrection of Jesus. He believes that the African American church has been too silent in preaching, teaching, and protesting against the ills of an oppressive America.

When considering the need to equip laypersons for leadership within the church from the foundation of Black liberation theology, two questions quickly come to mind. First, are laypersons being properly equipped and used in the battle to overcome

oppression within the church? Secondly, while attempting to address racism and other forms of oppression, could the Black clergy be guilty of oppressing laypersons by muting their voices and limiting their participation in the overall leadership and guidance of the church? These two questions will be further explored below.

Black Liberation Theology & Equipping the Saints

James Cone states that the Martin Luther King, Jr. was a liberation theologian even before the term was coined. King was one of many Black preachers during the civil rights era and beyond that championed efforts that addressed racial and other forms of discrimination. Most of the leaders of the movement were Black preachers, who were pastors of many people. However, with the exception of a few laypersons, non-clergy has provided very little leadership. As significant as a role that Rosa Parks played, she was not a leader of the movement, simply a pivotal player in the movement.

Perhaps the Black liberation theological movement in the Black church would be much stronger and more sustained today if leadership was extended to the laity, and so much weight and responsibility was not placed on the clergy. In addition to preaching, teaching, and providing administrative leadership to their respective congregations, many black pastors have to be the leadership and voice of the community when it comes to matters of injustice. Perhaps the movement has declined and/or shifted from the leadership of the church because the church as a whole has not traditionally been involved in the movement.

Earlier, I mentioned that the church has not adequately utilized lay leadership in the soteriological function of the church. That is, the role of the laity in soul saving has

been grossly underutilized and that responsibility is often considered to be solely the responsibility of the ordained clergy. Similarly, the church has not adequately utilized lay leadership in the missiological function of the church. In particular, the AME church has relegated that responsibility to a small subgroup of the laity—the Women's Missionary Society. Such is the case with the Black liberation movement. Too often, the laity is relegated to a sideline role instead of being a part of the leadership of movements to address oppression.

The Black church pews contain highly educated and skillful parishioners. Doctors, lawyers, educators, social service workers, and others have the education and experience that can be of great benefit to any social justice movement. However, too often the leadership is vested in the pastor, to the exclusion of people who are involved in social justice issues simply by virtue of what they do for a living everyday.

Although Black liberation theology and the movement started as a Christian and church movement, we are experiencing a shift of the movement from the church to outside movements such as Black Lives Matter. For the first time in the history of the Black social justice movement in America, the primary forces behind the movement do not resonate from inside the walls of the Black church. Perhaps this is the case in part because clergy could not solely carry the weight of the movement. If Black pastors had engaged their parishioners in leading the movement, perhaps the movement would still be primarily a church led movement. In my opinion, it is not too late for this to change. However, the Black clergy must understand that the Black liberation theological movement can be lead by people other than the Black clergy. Black Christians in general,

and even non-Black Christians must get involved in leading the movement if the Black church expects to have an ongoing role in liberating the oppressed in the Unites States.

Black Liberation Theology and Lay Oppression

As the Black church works to liberate the Black community, one must ask whether or not the Black church has adequately liberated part of its own—the laity. In order for the laity to take its rightful place alongside the clergy leadership, the church must embrace the concept of the priesthood of all believers and understand that the laity is vital not only to the survival of the church, but also the leadership of the church.

It is commonplace in today's church market to see churches that place almost exclusive emphasis on the personality of the pastor. Church marquees and vans are more likely to have the pastor's name emblazoned on them than the address, telephone number, or website of the church. Many churches are better known by the pastor's name than the church's name. The name T. D. Jakes is perhaps more familiar to most than the name Potter's House. Creflo Dollar is a household name, while World Changers is not as widely known. Ask who Joel Osteen is, and perhaps all could tell you. Ask where Lakewood Church is, and you may get some head scratching. These examples show how the pastor's persona has become raised to the point that the average layperson seems insignificant in some ways.

The emergence of the pastor as somehow being above the parishioner can also undermine the importance of fellowship in the local church. As churches strive to grow larger and become mega-churches, many lay members have no fellowship with the pastor, and no real sense of the pastor's true identify, even from afar. Howard Thurman writes:

> Hatred often begins in a situation in which there is contact without fellowship, contact that is devoid of any of the primary overtures of warmth and fellow-feeling and genuineness. Of course, it must be borne in mind that there can be an abundance of sentimentality masquerading under the cloak of fellowship. It is easy to have fellowship on your own terms and to repudiate it if your terms are not acceptable. It is this kind of fellowship that one finds often in the South between whites and Negroes. As long as the Negro is called John or Mary and accepts the profoundly humiliating position of an inferior status, fellowship is quite possible. Great sacrifices are even made for him, and all the weight of position and power are at the disposal of the weaker person. It is precisely because of this false basis of fellowship so often found that in the section of the country where there is the greatest contact between Negro and white there is the least real fellowship, and the first step along the road of bitterness and hatred is assured.[5]

With the fame (and sometimes even fortune) also comes the belief by some that the laity is not as crucial to the overall success of the church. In some instances, the pastor has become the star actor with the laity as a supporting cast, or a lead singer with a backup group of vocalists and a band. There is sometimes the feeling that the pastor is absolutely essential, but the laypersons are interchangeable parts that can be plugged in or plugged out at the will of the pastor. "What is needed, then, is not integration but a sense of worth in being Black, and only Black people can teach that."[6] We have heard pastors refer to the church as my church, although the Word says Jesus called it His church. Consequently, there is in too many cases a lack of adequate regard for the laity.

A "my way or the highway" mentality presents a major roadblock to effectively engaging the laity in the work of the church. Black clergy may be guilty of having the same "white intellectual arrogance which assumes that it has a monopoly on intelligence

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[5] Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2012), Kindle Edition, 75-76.

[6] James H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), Kindle Edition 414-415.

and moral judgment"[7] that Cone speaks about. Liberation theology's primary focus is on freeing people from the bondage created by oppressive systems and cultures. However, some have criticized the movement as not placing enough emphasis on self-sufficiency and overcoming the dependency model. While I do not support this view, I think it is important that we explore this view with more depth, with the goal of ascertaining if there are perhaps certain truths that might aptly apply to the church, in its attempt to free up the laity to support the overall leadership of the church.

> Black theology is primarily a theology of and for black people who share the common belief that racism will be destroyed only when black people decide to say in word and deed to the white racist: "We ain't gonna stand any more of this."[8]

The above quote from Cone's book suggests that the solution to the problem of racism is to confront an external force (the white racist), but makes no mention of the need to engage in internal confrontation. By that, I suggest that while we confront most of those who oppress us, we must also confront ourselves to make sure that we properly manage our own destiny as we deal with racism and other forms of oppression. For example, we must deal with the proliferation of predatory lenders in our Black communities. However, we must increase the level of financial literacy in our communities so people will be able to calculate rates of interest and determine when such rates are unreasonable. We must confront health disparities in our community, but we must also be committed to living healthier lifestyles through proper diet, exercise, and health habits. We must challenge the local school boards when they fail to adequately invest in inner city schools. However, we must also encourage our children to read, and

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[7] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, Kindle Location 434.

[8] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, Kindle Locations 1860-1861.

make sure that they are doing homework and studying at home as well as school. If we cry for more independence, yet lack the tools and skills to function and thrive independently, it is only a matter of time before we will find ourselves back into another form of bondage.

There is no strong indication that the Black liberation theology movement has involved a large number of non-clergy church people in its leadership process. Most of the liberation leaders have been clergy. Most of the people that the Black clergy has tried to liberate of course are Black lay people who sit in the pews of the church. By preaching "let my people go" to secular establishments and systems, it is the attempt of the Black clergy leaders to liberate their parishioners from what they have to deal with Monday through Saturday on their jobs, in their schools and in the overall marketplace. "The goal of Black self-determination and Black self-identity—Black Power—is full participation in the decision making process affecting the lives of Black people."[9] However, one has to question how liberated their Sunday morning experience has become when they provide almost exclusively follow ship and little to no leadership. The result of this is that they have been rendered almost completely ineffective in helping to carry Christ's bride, the church. Please note that this is not an indictment against the Black clergy, but instead is a wake-up call to the clergy and laity alike. The clergy is perhaps responsible for taking on too much responsibility, while the laity is responsible for not taking on its share of the responsibility.

Whereas Black liberation theology is considered by many to be a viable tool for addressing and confronting racism and other forms of oppression from a theological

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[9] Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, Kindle Locations 368-369.

perspective, it does not seem to lend itself to being an effective tool for assisting the laity to take their rightful place of leadership and authority within the local church context. In other words, while it stresses Black power, it does not address lay power. While Black lay people are taught to become leaders outside the church, there is little emphasis on becoming leaders within the church.

There was a time where African Americans could only lead in African American communities and establishments. We could lead in our Black schools, our black owned businesses, and our black churches. However, as a result of integration, we can now lead in places beyond our traditional black establishments. Unfortunately, most Black lay people seek leadership in many other places, but no longer seek leadership opportunities in the Black church. We must work to change this dynamic if we are to be truly liberated. Black liberation should not focus on the secular, but most also focus within the Black church.

Conclusion

In addressing the issue of equipping lay leadership for service in the faith community, I decided to approach this topic by briefly looking at it from several theological perspectives. I considered lay leadership from a soteriological perspective, a missiological perspective, as well as from the pneumatological perspective. However, since Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church is a part of a denomination that believes heavily in liberation theology, I decided to focus on how the liberation theological movement embraces equipping lay leadership for service in the faith community.

The liberation theological movement has made tremendous strides in addressing racial and other forms of oppression and injustice, especially in America. It's emphasis on showing Jesus and His gospel from a holistic (as opposed to a white) perspective goes without saying. However, in looking closely at the black church, it appears that Black liberation has not resulted in lay liberation. In many of our churches, the emphasis on clergy leadership to the exclusion of lay leadership in very pronounced.

It appears that while the Black church is preaching and teaching its congregants to become liberated leaders in the broader society, there is not such an emphasis on the laity becoming liberated leaders within the church. In some ways, the Black clergy helps to liberate the people beyond the pews, while keeping them in bondage within the pews. The leadership of the liberation movement within the church has unfortunately focused on clergy leadership, not lay leadership. Given the demands that are placed on the pastor within the church walls, it is no surprise that the pastor has not been able to keep pace with the fast changing needs of the justice movement beyond the walls. If the church laity were properly trained and utilized in the justice movements beyond the walls, perhaps the role of the church in today's justice movement would be just as great, if not greater, now than before.

However, we are living in a time where the church's influence and lead role in the justice movement has been supplanted by the Black Lives Matter movement, along with other similar movements. The church is no longer the automatic place where people go to have their justice needs met. In fact, many outside of the church now feel that the church is either irrelevant or ill equipped to deal with today's justice matters. This is in part due to the lack of involvement of the vast majority of the church's membership—the laity.

As we witness the lessening of the Black church's role outside of the walls, we are also witnessing the lessening within the walls as well. I believe the struggle that the Black church is experiencing within is caused by the same reason of the struggle without—the absence of strong lay leadership. If the church expects to fulfill its God-mandated mission, it must find a way to increase the level of participation of the laity in its leadership.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Thus far we have discussed the need for second tier leadership from the biblical, historical, and theological foundational perspectives. We will now look at a few existing theoretical models that seek to provide effective second tier leadership in the local church.

The Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church published a leadership guide designed to have leaders follow in the footsteps of Jesus when doing ministry. The guide is intended to do the following:

1. To assist the local church Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development
2. In selection, training and evaluation of church leaders
3. To help current leaders evaluate their own leadership as they plan for continued growth
4. To help potential leaders as they consider their response to an invitation to leadership
5. To be lifted up before the congregation as a goal for all disciples to work toward.[1]

According to the Board of Laity of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church, not every person will be able to fully accomplish these expectations just as people of faith do not have every spiritual gift. However, it is the intention of the Virginia Conference to develop a vehicle for personal and communal growth across the

[1] *Virginia Conference Board of Laity*, "Characteristics of Effective Churches in the Virginia Conference" (Glen Allen, VA: Center for Lay Leadership Excellence).

Virginia Conference enabling them to model what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. There are four key components of the Virginia Conference leadership guide, which are, 1) Primary Commitments; 2); Character 3) Leadership Lifestyles and; 4) Discipleship.

Primary Commitments

- Leaders recognize that commitment to Jesus Christ is the foundation for all leadership in the church, and that commitment to God's will is the beginning of all vision.
- They recognize making disciples of Jesus Christ as the primary goal of the Church and of individual Christians.
- They see those who are closest to them - their family and friends – as the frontline arena for their ministry/ service, and commit to give them the best of themselves rather than the leftovers.

Character

- Leaders seek to respond to conflict as Jesus did—directly, openly, and responsibly, treating others with respect and always seeking justice, healthy accountability, and reconciliation. They recognize the importance of character and seek to become people whose lives are marked by integrity and compassion, and who treat others with respect regardless of their race, gender, social status, theological viewpoint, or any other human difference.
- They intentionally pursue spiritual growth and renewal of body, mind, and spirit, setting aside time to deepen their relationship with God and to grow in faith and discipleship.

Leadership Style

- Leaders are determined to be servant-leaders, seeking the good of the kingdom rather than their own power and status, and making decisions based on the good of the whole Church rather than their own preferences.
- They listen to God, to the community, to their congregation, and to others of differing viewpoints, as well as to their own hearts as they discern visions and set goals for their church's future and ministry.

- They are future-oriented, willing to take risks as they encourage others to celebrate the past while moving toward the future.
- They partner with their pastors—praying for, supporting and encouraging them, and dealing honestly and openly with difficult issues.
- They seek to identify, nurture, encourage, and support leadership in others.

Discipleship

- Leaders seek to grow in all areas of discipleship.
- They commit to regular, frequent participation in worship and study, and to grow in giving, service, prayer, and witness.
- They recognize tithing as the traditional standard for giving and commit to grow toward or beyond tithing.
- They support the ministries and programs of the local church, district, conference, and general church, in order to more effectively accomplish the mission of the Church.
- They seek to understand and interpret the Methodist distinctives: history, tradition, beliefs, worship, structure, and vision.
- They are committed to discovering, developing, and practicing their spiritual gifts, and to encourage others to do the same.
- They are committed to hands-on service in and beyond the local church, meeting the practical and spiritual needs of others in the church, the community, and the world.[2]

According to Aubrey Malphurs in his book *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Excellence,* 90% of all churches are considered small and 10% are considered large. Malphurs states that more than half of congregations in America have less than 100 adult persons in regular attendance in worship. Of that number, 25% of churchgoers attend churches of fifty persons or less in worship. Based on these statistics it stands to reason that boards of laity rather than pastors lead a significant number of

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[2] *Virginia Conference Board of Laity.*

churches.[3] One of the fundamental reasons boards of laity lead churches rather than pastors is because it takes five to six years to become recognized as the pastor of a church, and in some churches, the congregation still will not relinquish the power of governance and leadership to the pastor. In other instances, pastors do not typically stay around long enough to have the leadership mantle bestowed upon them.

While there is an ongoing need to train and develop pastoral leaders for the church, there is an even greater need to train and develop boards of laity. In today's church climate, more and more churches are seeking pastors with seminary degrees; however, these same churches have done little to equip their laity to lead leaders. Although the requirement of becoming the pastor is based on achievements such as ordination by a credible ordination council, advanced seminary education and experience, the church's position on training laity remains stagnant.

Malphurs sees a great need to train laity since in many ways, they are more powerful that pastors, especially in the regular small membership congregation, which is the majority of congregations in America today. He believes that adequately trained laity is one of the keys to congregational growth and revitalization in the twenty-first century.[4] George Barna says that in an age of unprecedented opportunity and plentiful resources, the church is actually loosing influence because of ineffective laity leaders and the church unwillingness to change the way they do things.[5]

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[3] Aubrey Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Excellence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 12.

[4] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church,* 13.

[5] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church,* 14.

The argument for effective laity boards continues as John Carver states that most of what the majority of boards do either does not need to be done or is a waste of time when done by the board. Conversely, most of what boards need to do for strategic leadership is not done. George Babbes says, "It's no secret that most ministries are not managed well…Few boards seem to understand what really drives the ministry's effectiveness and fewer still can evaluate progress toward ministry objectives."[6]

The fundamental problem of most laity boards is a lack of specificity and clarification around what their role is, what they are supposed to be doing and distinguishing when an issue is something the board should be involved in or not. Another problem for most laity boards centers around process and how to get things done. Not only is there confusion and a lack of clarity around the role of the board, there is also a need for the board to have clarity in how they get things done. With these two major issues looming at the board level of most churches, it is no wonder that pastors are overworked and under appreciated. When lay leaders and laity boards are unsure of who they are and how they function in support of the pastor, a sharp decrease in productivity normally arise.

According to Malphurs, there are eleven areas where laity boards need improvement if they are to maximize their effectiveness in assisting the pastor in building the kingdom of God where they are planted:

- Limited meeting time
- Trivial agenda items
- Inconsistent decision making

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[6] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church,* 13-15.

- Unclear lines of authority
- Adverse board interference
- Unclear board expectations
- Low esprit de corps
- Cultural conditioning
- Poor planning
- Too many participants
- Focus on the past[7]

Thus far Malphurs has identified two ways that laity boards are ineffective in supporting the church and the ministry of the pastor: not knowing what to do, and not knowing how to get it done. Now we will look at a third way that laity boards are ineffective, leadership development. Central to a lack of effectiveness in the area of leadership development is the assumptions that laity leaders have about themselves. According to Malphurs, most laity leaders do not consider themselves when it comes to being developed. They never consider that they do not know what they are doing or that the traditional approach to leadership might not be the best approach.[8]

Impacting the need to develop laity leaders is the good old boy network of people who have served in leadership for a number of years and have developed a sense of affinity for one another without having the qualifications for leading. When this occurs, persons that God has sent to the church to work, serve, and lead are often frustrated with those who have positions without a track record of getting things done. The longer this

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[7] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church,* Kindle Edition.

[8] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church,* Kindle Edition.

phenomenon occurs, the greater the probability of gifted persons leaving the ministry in search of a place to serve where they can find meaning, inward satisfaction, and a sense of belonging.[9]

The solution offered to leading leaders based on Malphurs assessment of congregations emerges from the gloom and doom of constant failure and mediocre ministry results. Malphurs believes that unless you are able to articulate the issues and systemic problems inherent at the leadership level, you will not be able to satisfactorily provide reasonable solutions to these concerns. From his research and consulting with struggling congregations, four growth areas are identified to assist any laity board regardless of the size of the congregation or the average worship attendance:

- Determine proper board functions
- Find a better board process
- Train the board in the new process
- Recruit the best person as board members

As we recall from our earlier discussion of why laity boards are not functioning at optimal levels, congregations must be willing to reestablish leadership norms, teach qualified persons how to function within those norms and allow results of ministry operation to be one of the key determinates of ministry success or failure. The time has come for the church to move away from the status quo and doing things out of tradition and convenience for the select few. If laity leadership is to emerge from ineffective models of leadership the church must move toward a results oriented method of leadership, one where each leader can determine for themselves how effective their

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[9] Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church*, Kindle Edition.

leadership is in meeting the relevant needs of the congregation and the ministry goals set and agreed upon by the pastor and the congregation-at-large.

In considering how to change the ethos of the congregation to encourage leaders to lead, Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck suggest that the church examine what is missing from its leadership model before abandoning it for other models that may work for a while but have little effect on the ethos of the church's leadership.

Geiger and Peck suggest that most churches exist to keep their programs and services running. Although some have above average pastoral leaders who attend seminary, conferences, seminars and workshops, their pews are warmed with immobile, uninspired, and ill-equipped saints. If the men and women of God are to rise up and build God's kingdom for God's glory, the church must unlock the power of God that is within each member. Leaders must develop consistently and intentionally through a process of conviction, culture, and constructs.

In *Designed to Lead,* Geiger and Peck examine what is missing in most church leadership models. Interestingly, they do not recommend a new model of leadership, rather they recommend finding out what is missing and supply it. In their experience, conviction, culture, and constructs are missing. When Geiger and Peck refer to conviction, culture and constructs, they are not referring to the conventional definition of the words, rather how the process of conviction, culture, and constructs should operate in the life of the local church.[10]

According to the design to lead model of leadership development, churches who consistently produce leaders have a strong conviction to develop leaders, a healthy

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[10] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2016), 14.

culture for leadership development, and helpful constructs to systematically and intentionally build leaders. All three of these components are necessary if leader development is to take place.[11]

Conviction is the God-initiated passion that fuels a leader and the church. Without the conviction to develop leaders, development will not occur. The conviction must permeate the very being and existence of the entire congregation as a nonnegotiable value. When this happens the culture of the congregation will change. Culture in this wise is the shared values and beliefs that drive the direction of the congregation. When considering culture, one must consider the written and unwritten values and beliefs based on how the church functions over time. Once conviction becomes a part of the culture of the congregation, it will infuse a burning desire and passion to develop leaders and create an environment where there is an expectation that all members of the church should be leading in some area of ministry.[12]

Constructs are the ways and means to make leadership development possible. There are a plethora of constructs contained in books and articles on leadership development that seem to cause frustration and exhaustion for many local churches because of what is missing. Constructs in and of themselves are not very useful over the long haul without first having strong leader development conviction and a culture that burns with desire for members to become leaders as a shared value and belief. This becomes the key to what is missing in most local churches, a lack of conviction and culture toward leader development. Too often, the proclivity of the church is to find a construct to solve the problem without first establishing conviction and creating culture.

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[11] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 14-15.

[12] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 15.

Without these two elements, the best and greatest construct will fail to produce the expected return on the investment toward developing leaders.

Geiger and Peck put it this way:

- Constructs without Conviction = Apathy
  Filling slots to make programs happen is the norm in most churches. This norm often leads to ministry failure. Ministry failure over time will lead to ministry apathy. Establishing conviction for developing leaders can thwart ministry apathy.

- Constructs without Culture = Exhaustion
  Great constructs are difficult to execute when the culture of the church is not inclusive of leader development. Without a culture of leader development constructs are viewed as another set of things to do and cumbersome hoops to jump through. Members just get tired of trying new ways and getting the same results.

- Conviction without Constructs = Frustration
  Although a congregation has deep conviction about leader development but does not have a viable construct to make it happen, they become frustrated. Without a process to make convictions a reality, ongoing leadership development will become nothing more than wishful thinking.[13]

Geiger and Peck draw a comparison between Moses and Joshua when it comes to what is missing in leader development. Moses lived to be 120 and also lived with an urgency to develop others through the personal one-on-one development of Joshua and through effective delegation of duties based on the advice of Jethro his father in-law. Upon the death of Moses, Joshua was ready to lead the children of Israel because he was mentored by Moses and was with him during critical times in the life of the Israelites. However, there is a strong contrast in their leadership. At the death of Moses, Joshua was poised and ready to take the children of Israel into the Promised Land. After the death of Joshua, a generation rose up that did not know what the Lord had done for His people.

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[13] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 15-16.

There is no record of Joshua ever doing anything to invest in anyone or prepare leaders to follow him. As a result, Israel enters a period of leadership failure after leadership failure as recorded in the book of Judges. The book opens with the people asking God who should go first and who should lead them. Clearly there was no leader out front. From that moment, leader after leader steps up and leads the people more poorly than the last. Because of Joshua's shortsightedness the people of Israel found themselves in a leadership crisis.[14]

In concluding the methodology of Geiger and Peck, they leave the reader with a very simple process taken from scripture that will assist the church with conviction, culture, and constructs. They remind us of what Paul says to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2: "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach other also" (ESV). The epiphany in this passage is in the interpretation. Paul did not say to find great leaders, and try and make them faithful, rather he said, entrust all the important things to the faithful, and in time, they will be able. Biblical leadership is finding the faithful who will be able. Not finding the able who might be faithful. Therefore, the formula for leader development is this:

- Find those whose hearts are His and coach them on competence.
- Invest in people who love the Lord and develop their skills.
- Pour yourself into people who have devoted themselves to Him.

The formula for leader development as ascribed by Paul is not withstanding the directives of Geiger and Peck of first establishing conviction, cultivating culture, and implementing constructs.

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[14] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 19.

As pastors, we too are susceptible to making mistakes in our leadership understanding, character, and development. In *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*, Hans Finzel shares a sobering reality that hampers many leaders and stunts growth of would be leaders significantly. According to Finzel, once aware of these mistakes, leaders can move toward modifying their leadership styles and characteristics to avoid mistakes that erode confidence in your ability to successfully lead.

The list of the top ten mistakes leaders make are:

1. The top-down attitude
2. Putting paperwork before people work
3. The absence of affirmation
4. No room for mavericks
5. Dictatorship in decision making
6. Dirty delegation
7. Communication Chaos
8. Missing the clues of the corporate culture
9. Success without successors
10. Failure to focus on the future[15]

Finzel admits that having a top down attitude is the chief culprit of all mistakes that leaders make. His contention is that leaders who have the top down attitude negatively affect everything around them even if this is not their intention. The top down attitude spreads to everything your leadership touches. It is based on the military model of barking orders to weak underlings. He believes that top down attitudes shows up in

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[15] Hans Finzel, *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Publishing, 1994).

abusive authority, deplorable delegation, a lack of listening, dictatorship in decision making, lack of letting go and egocentric mannerism.[16]

Most of the other mistakes that leaders make according to Finzel are a by-product of the top down attitude. The reason most leaders fall prey to the top down attitude approach to leadership is based on five prevailing concepts:

1. It is traditional
2. It is the most common
3. It is the easiest
4. It comes natural
5. It reflects the dark side of human nature[17]

Not leaving the leader without a path forward, Finzel contrast the top down attitude style of leadership with servant leadership, which is about caring for others more than ourselves. It is about compassion for everyone who serves the group and it promotes the good of everyone in the group. To develop a servant leadership style one must be willing to put into practice these attributes.

- Not abusive authority, but servitude
- Not deplorable delegation, but freedom for people to be themselves
- Not lack of listening, but focus on the needs of others
- Not dictatorship, but partners in the process
- Not holding on, but letting go with affirmation
- Not egocentrism but power for others.

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[16] Finzel, *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*, 25.

[17] Finzel, *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*, 26-27.

The context of ministry for this project is based on a long-term pastorate where pastoral leadership has been responsible for getting things done. When considering the mistakes that leaders make, it brings to light a number of mistakes, knowing or unknowing that have been committed over the course of this pastorate. The question now is, what is the best path forward.

In looking for methods to empower the laity to take hold of ministry with zeal to glorify God through ministry service, Johnny M. Hunt and John C. Maxwell espouse the notion that most leaders are guilty of underutilizing members and not expecting enough from them. In *Building Your Leadership Resume: Developing the Legacy That Will Outlast You*, Hunt and Maxwell encourages leaders that if they want to create a legacy that will outlast themselves, they must share a resolve to be used for a great purposes, to effect lasting change to have an impact on future generations so that your influence does not dry up and blow away at your death.[18]

It is impossible for leaders to challenge others toward greater heights when they do not have a clear vision for the church and a process for reaching the vision. If the leaders are not passionate about where the church is going, it is next to impossible for them to empower others to get on board. Secondly leaders must take stock in their level of self-centeredness. Leaders can ill afford to get entangled in their own egos that they miss the opportunity to see worth, value and promise in others. Leaders must not become afraid to empower others. In fact when leaders do not empower others, they are failing to glorify God through making disciples of the sheep within their gates.[19]

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[18] Johnny M. Hunt and John C. Maxwell, *Building Your Leadership Resume: Developing the Legacy That Will Outlast You* (Nashville, TN: 3H Publishers, 2009), 2.

[19] Hunt and Maxwell, *Building Your Leadership Resume*, 6-7.

Leaders must empower new leaders and set them free to maximize their God-given potential through ministry service. This is not a fast process or a quick fix; it becomes the path forward for leaders to be able to see layers of leadership serving at different levels throughout the church. This will also allow leaders to see the potential of new emerging leaders willing to go above and beyond the norm to give God glory as they use their gifts in ministry service.

Leaders must raise the bar. Set the high standard. Let people realize how important their work is. Most importantly, leaders must stop under challenging their members from fear that they will revolt and tell them no. Leaders must begin expecting more, and watch what God will do in their lives.[20]

When it comes to motivating and maintaining church leaders, the United Methodist Church provides five strategic tips for pastors and ministry leaders. The five tips are 1) Do not take anyone for granted; 2) Always have a plan B; 3) Remember; better together; 4) Do not force your passion; and 5) Lead by example.

In an article entitled "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers," the question is raised, "Would people continue to give their all if they were not paid for their service." Even though no answer was given, it does say something about the nature of volunteer service in the life of the church. Since many of the people who serve the church work for little or no money, it makes sense to provide a level of care and appreciation for the work that they do.[21]

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[20] Hunt and Maxwell, *Building Your Leadership Resume*, 9.

[21] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers," accessed November 27, 2017, http://www.umcom.org/learn/5-tips-to-motivate-and-maintain-church-volunteers.

Without exception, churches cannot function without the time and assistance of its members through volunteer service. In this wise, churches must take stock in and value the generosity and selfless devotion volunteers provide to the church. Although volunteers serve sacrificially, they are still to be treated as people of sacred worth and valued for what they do in building up the kingdom of God. We must be more sensitive to and considerate of those who are giving of their time and talent to help the church advance its mission and to serve others. Here are some new ways to look at the *ministry* of volunteers.

Do not take anyone for granted. Some pastors lament a lack of devoted followers willing to give more time to the church and cite the "20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work" statistic; but what about the 80 percent of the people who do 20 percent of the work? Too many churches take those people for granted. What would happen if the ushers did not show up or if the choir stopped rehearsing? The reality is they do not have to serve. Every chance you get, thank volunteers, let them know their work matters and tell them how much they bring to the body of Christ.[22]

Always have a Plan B. Children get sick, cars break down and sometimes, people simply forget. Pastors and paid staff need to consider what would happen if volunteers did not show up. For example: It is Sunday, and one of your nursery workers is not there. Are you prepared? Do you have a go-to list of trained people for whom you have background checks? These people may not want a regular rotation in the nursery, yet may be willing to help when a need arises.[23]

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[22] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

[23] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

Another strategy is to over-recruit and under-anticipate. If I think I need eight people to complete a task, I recruit nine. Chances are, one person will not be there. If all nine volunteers show up, all the better. (Just make sure you have enough work to go around if everyone *does* show up.) Ask: What would I do if my volunteers could not be present? Doing this will limit the frustration and anger that sometimes accompany working with unpaid servants. It allows us to extend grace and compassion when people do not show.[24]

Remember: better together. An important part of the ethos of the church is community. Bring this into your philosophy of supporting volunteers, particularly if they do mundane tasks such as folding bulletins or mowing grass. It is more fun to work with a partner. Even the most boring task can become fun when you also build authentic relationships.[25]

Do not force your passion. Every pastor has a passion for at least one cause. Clergy often want the congregation also to volunteer for that cause. If you cannot recruit tutors for the local school, it may be that is your passion, but not one your faith community shares. Do not force a vision that is not catching on. Find creative ways to encourage the congregation to understand the needs of the community, why tutoring is important and how they can make a difference by considering this vision. Before you begin thinking about new ministries, work with your congregation to explore your

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[24] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

[25] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

community's needs. Discover your church's calling and enhance outreach efforts by creating a church marketing plan.[26]

Lead by example. Pastors need to discover their personal passion and give of themselves. Service to others is part of the United Methodist heritage. John Wesley spent his time ministering to those on the margins of society (prisoners, debtors in poorhouses, widows and those who frequented soup kitchens) and he called upon those who followed him to commit to serving the poor, a particularly important invitation since they were among the poor themselves. When pastors volunteer, we become servants. Pastors who serve in the community regularly are more understanding of and less judgmental toward those who serve as volunteers in their congregations. They go out of their way to say thank you and speak personally about how fulfilling it is to follow a passion and serve. Appreciate volunteers, plan for the inevitable, and remember, even when you are paid for your ministry, you are still a servant.[27]

Thus far we have looked at several leadership development models for the local church. From the models that have been examined, there is something in each of the models that could have a profound impact on Wayman Temple.

The Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church's model took a holistic approach to leadership development and sought to develop a plan that would be consistent across its annual conference. This approach contextualized makes sense as the connectional church seeks to replicate ministry that is deemed effective, thereby making it possible for more churches in the annual conference to enjoy the benefits of leadership

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[26] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

[27] "5 Tips to Motivate and Maintain Church Volunteers."

development. This model has as its focal point, doing ministry like Jesus, and as such, was interested in a leader's primary concerns, character, leadership style and discipleship.

The Leading Leaders model centered on board development and making sure that church boards worked together to support the pastor in meeting the vision and mission of the church. This model stressed that because pastors come and go, it was incumbent upon local churches to develop laity leaders who lead with or without a pastor's presence. The model stressed attributes of laity development that would lead to clarity of purpose, clear direction, maximization of people's time and a desire to know what to do and how to do it.

The most impactful model was the Designed to Lead model which argued for finding what was missing in existing models of laity development prior to abandoning them for something that will only bring temporary solutions at best. In finding what was missing, the model encouraged conviction, culture, and constructs. The model was very powerful in that it insisted that conviction, culture, and constructs must be inseparable in order for laity development to be a success. This model is the chosen model to use in a modified format to assist in providing second tier leadership to Wayman Temple AME Church.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

Wayman Temple African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church is a congregation that has experienced steady growth over the last twenty-three years under my leadership. Some of the growth and success of the congregation can be directly contributed to the depth and intentionality of my preparation to lead God's people as pastor. Often, pastors come to ministry ill prepared to handle the multiple dynamics necessary to mobilize a sustainable and vital congregation. As I reflect on my journey toward ordained ministry, I do not take lightly the role my father played in my growth and development. As a pastor's kid (PK), I was exposed to ministry from all aspects growing up in the family home, and following my father to various church activities, meetings, and conferences. My undergraduate and graduate degrees provided a strong foundation in business administration, finance and accounting; these foundational courses and experience along with being a certified public accountant proved invaluable.

As I continued to grow and develop the congregation and associated ministries, I began to realize that most of the leadership and direction for the success of the church rested solely on my shoulders. The more we expand and grow, the less time I had for sermon preparation, visioning and planning.

Many of today's churches place too much dependence on the charisma, skills, and abilities of the senior pastor for their continued success. As a result, when the senior pastor retires, becomes ill, or leaves the church for any reason, the church is not able to sustain its level of success, unless the succeeding leader has similar skills and abilities. Churches can better secure their long term futures and take undue stress off the senior pastor with a highly trained second tier leadership team (deacons, stewards, trustees, assistant ministers, lay ministry leaders, etc.).

Based upon my ministry context, interest, skills, and experience, I offer the following hypothesis: Most second tier leaders in the local church setting can be developed into more effective leaders if they are enlightened, energized, educated, and empowered to lead the church regardless of the skills and abilities of the senior pastor.

Methodology

The objective of the project was to develop a model that would equip/train current and potential lay leaders of Wayman Temple AME Church in order that they would become more active in providing leadership to the congregation. When these lay leaders are trained and empowered, they would become more effective leaders, lessen the burden currently being carried by the senior pastor, provide the senior pastor more time to spend studying the Word, planning and visioning and create a rich environment for the church to thrive.

The goal of the project was to develop a leadership-training model to enable the church to be more effective in identifying, training, and empowering current and future leaders to maximize their leadership potential through shared leadership. A by-product of

this model was to enlighten the lay leaders regarding the need for them to take a more active leadership role, and to challenge the senior pastor to begin to delegate more responsibility to other leaders.

The people involved in the project for interview and questioning were non-ordained staff ministers, stewards, trustees, other ministry leaders, and potential leaders. Some of these individuals were paid staff, while most were volunteers. The pastor selected and approved all persons to participate in the project. Each person selected was properly oriented and instructed regarding the nature of the project. Each person selected was personally interviewed and completed a questionnaire/pre-test to assess their level of knowledge about the church, their leadership role, and their willingness to take on more leadership responsibility within their current leadership assignment. Once this was completed, they were expected to participate in a leadership training process, which involved a sermon/teaching series, selected assigned readings, and participation a leadership workshop. Attendance sheets were maintained for each leadership training session to record the level of participation of each leader at each event. Upon completion of the leadership training process, the same individuals took a follow-up questionnaire/post-test that contained the same questions that were included in the pre-test.

The result of the pre-test was compared to the results of the posttest to determine the effectiveness of the leadership training process. Special attention was given to the results and the training attendance to see if there were any correlations between the results and attendance patterns. After completion of the fieldwork and the results

tabulation, the results were review to determine how each leader could become more involved in providing leadership to the church.

The role of the professional associates during the implementation of this project was to serve in an advisory capacity. Professional associates were asked to review all documentation related to the project, and to provide their professional insight regarding the nature of the project, based on their experience and expertise. The contributions of the context associates were:

- Help communicate to each project participant
- Help draft the questionnaire/pre-test document, as well as the questionnaire/post-test document
- Make sure appropriate rooms, facilities, technology and supplies were available for each project activity
- Help disseminate the pre and posttest to the participants
- Maintain ongoing communication with the participants
- Record participant attendance at all leadership training sessions
- Compile the results of the pre and posttests, including comparative summaries
- Organize and display the results from the questionnaires/tests
- Compile, organize, and display the results from the questionnaire
- Taking notes/minutes of all project meetings and sessions
- Where appropriate, make recommendations on how the project can be enhanced or made more efficient
- Assist the candidate in whatever other areas where assistance is needed.

Some of the preliminary examples of questions to be asked on the questionnaire were:

- How long have you been a member of Wayman Temple?
- How long have you been an active member of any church?
- How long have you held your current leadership position?
- Do you know where the name "Wayman" comes from?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you know about the history of Wayman Temple AME Church?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you know about the history of your denomination?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you know about your current leadership position?
- Do you truly feel called to your current leadership position?
- Do you truly feel equipped to carry out the duties of your current leadership position?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you know about the long term vision of the pastor or church?
- What is the advantage or benefit of being in your current leadership position?
- What is the disadvantage or drawback of being in your current leadership position?
- Do you know your spiritual gift(s)? If yes, please share them. If not, share what you think they may be.
- Are you willing to become more committed in providing leadership in your current role?
- Are you willing to participate in ongoing leadership development and training sessions?

The method used to test the hypothesis and evaluate the extent to which expectations were met included:

- Interviewing all lay leaders (non-ordained staff ministers, stewards, trustees, other ministry leaders, and potential lay leaders) to explain the project and determine their willingness to participate in the project
- Creating a pre-test/questionnaire for this group to complete
- Creating a posttest/questionnaire for this same group
- Giving pre-test/questionnaire to all participants to complete
- Compiling the results of the pre-test/questionnaire, but delay the release of the results until after the post-test/questionnaire.
- Conducting a leadership training program, which was comprised of the following:
    - Sermon/teaching series on leadership
    - A workshop on leadership
    - Assigned readings

This context has experienced phenomenal growth over the last twenty-three years. During this period, the number of church members has grown, as well as the number of ministries. In addition to the core church, the context also included a three hundred-student elementary charter school, and a community development corporation that provides services to children and families in the community. All of these functions reported to the senior pastor, who has too many responsibilities. Although the church membership has grown, the capabilities and responsibilities of the lay leaders have not grown commensurately.

For this project, lay leaders include non-ordained staff ministers, stewards, trustees, other ministry leaders, and the general lay membership of the church. These lay leaders should play a vital role in assisting the senior pastor in leading the church and

related entities. With a larger and growing membership, the need for more dedicated and trained leaders is vital to the continued growth and health of the church.

If the church officers and lay leaders are properly trained, they would become more effective leaders. More effective leaders would take some of the load off the senior pastor, while allowing others members to take ownership in the long-term success of the church. The defining problem for consideration is the need to identify, instruct, and empower the lay leaders to take on more responsibility.

Implementation

It was decided that in order to effectively manage the project, keep track of scheduled deadlines, and maximize participant's time and participation, we adhered to a project calendar to guide our progress. The project calendar and timeline was as follows:

Date	Task
November 3rd - 8th	Worked on developing and selecting the questions for the interview
November 11th	Met with the context associates to give them an overview of the dates, expectations during the interviews, how to compile the information gathered from the interviews, confidentiality, their dates of availability for the inventory and questionnaire.
November 12th	Met and greet with the focus group and the context associates. Introduction of the context associates and their responsibilities during this project to the focus group
November 13th	Interviewed first half of the focus group
November 17th	Interviewed the remaining half of the focus group
November 19th - 20th	Compiled the results of the interview with the context associates assistance and sharing the inventory on personality and spiritual gifts that will be used next week with the focus group
November 25th	Administered the selected inventory to all that can come from the focus group

December 2nd	Administered the selected inventory to the remaining focus group member
December 9th - 12th	Worked with the context associates to compile, organize and analyze the results of the inventory given to the focus group
December 15th - 19th	Distributed the questionnaire to the focus group
January 5th	Met with the context associates to compile, organize, and analyze the results of the questionnaires from the focus group
January 13th	Met with the focus group and share the results of the inventory and questionnaire. Discuss the idea of developing an effective active participation model. If the results show that they do not see a need for an active participation model, then there will be discussion on what they perceive will be needed to improve on what currently exist

Pre and Posttest

Below are the results of the pre and posttest and its subsequent analysis. On a scale of 1-5, the participants were to rate the following statements based on their understanding of the church and church leadership.

1=highly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=highly agree

I know about the history of Wayman Temple AME Church?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	8%	29%	48%	20%
Post Test	0%	4%	24%	48%	24%

Beginning with the pretest, of the participants answering this question, 48% agreed that they knew the history of the church, however, it is surprising that only 20% indicated that they highly agreed, while 29% were neutral. Of those who disagreed, only 8% chose this category. The posttest indicated similar results as the pre test; this would indicate that knowing the history of Wayman Temple AME Church had no significant

bearing on the study. It also would indicate that based on the intergenerational members who participated, consideration should be given to increasing the historical significance of the church among all congregants.

I know about the history of my denomination?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	48%	20%	32%
Post Test	0%	0%	40%	32%	28%

The pretest regarding the history of the denomination among those who responded indicated that a significantly greater number of members agree with this question. Half as many participants according to the difference between the pre and posttest indicated they know more about the denomination than they do the church. While this is not a driving concern at this time, it is a concern that should be queried. If Wayman AME or any church who considers moving leadership to a second tier of responsibility, those who are leaders must have a greater appreciation and knowledge of the local congregation, it's members, and futuristic vision. The greater the knowledge of the congregation increases significantly the possibility that member will have a greater sense of ownership of its leadership role.

I feel truly called to my current leadership position?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	8%	64%	28%
Post Test	0%	0%	12%	48%	40%

This question was designed to get to the heart of the commitment level of current ministry leaders of Wayman AME. According to the pre test, 64% agreed that they felt called to their leadership position and 28% indicated a higher level of call to their

position. This would indicate that over 90% of the participants felt some sense of call to their respective leadership position. These numbers changed slightly on the pretest with the greatest changes coming from a significantly greater number moving from agreeing to their call to highly agreeing; moving from 28% to 40%.

I feel truly equipped to carry out the duties of my current leadership position?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	20%	52%	36%
Post Test	0%	0%	12%	44%	44%

This question was asked to determine the level of equipping and requisite authority to act in carrying out their ministry. Of those responding, 52% agreed, 36% highly agreed and 20% were neutral. According to the posttest there was a 10% increase in those who highly agree and a reduction of 8% in the number of persons who were neutral. This would indicate that the ministry project changed the opinion of the participants toward being equipped to perform their ministry.

I know about the long-term vision of the pastor or church?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	28%	30%	42%
Post Test	0%	0%	8%	52%	40%

This question was designed to determine how much of the direction of the church was either known by the participants or shared by the pastor. According to the pre test, 28% of the respondents were neutral when it came to knowing the long-term vision of the pastor or church. Another 30% agreed and 42% highly agreed. While an overall 72% of the respondents felt they knew the vision of the pastor or the church, the 28% responding

neutral give rise to some concern about their commitment to following the leadership of their pastor in developing a second tier leadership model.

After the pretest there was a 20% decrease in the number of respondents who were neutral and a 20% increase in the number who agreed. This would indicate that not only did members become enlightened on the vision and direction of the church, but also, they were willing to serve under such leadership. Those who highly agreed on the pre test were consistent with their responses on the posttest.

I am aware of the advantages or benefits of being in my current leadership position?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	8%	28%	36%	28%
Post Test	0%	0%	16%	36%	48%

Performing a job and knowing the advantages or benefits associated with that job is not always consistent. In this case, a lower number of participants were convinced of the benefits of being in their current leadership position. Of those who responded only 36% agreed and 28% highly agreed, while 28% were neutral and 8% disagreed. When leaders are unaware of the benefits associated with their assigned ministry, they are not able to maximize their potential.

After the project was completed, positive change occurred. Of those responding the neutral percentage moved down by 12% and those who disagreed no longer did so. There was also a significant change in those who highly agreed, moving from 28% to 48%; an increase of 20%.

I am aware of the disadvantages or drawbacks of being in my current leadership position?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	8%	28%	48%	16%
Post Test	0%	0%	24%	40%	36%

Can there really be disadvantages to lay ministry leadership? Of those responding, 8% disagreed, 28% were neutral, 48% agreed and 16% highly agreed. This would indicate a large number of respondents believe there is a downside to doing ministry. This could also be an indicator of participant's resistance to maximizing their potential when it comes to leadership at the second tier.

While there was an increase in overall believability, the number of those who were neutral remained the same. As with other questions, this might be an area for further exploration as the congregation moves to perfect a second tier leadership model in the life of their congregation.

I am willing to become more committed in providing leadership in my current role?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	0%	52%	48%
Post Test	0%	0%	0%	32%	68%

It appears this question demonstrated that participants were willing to become more committed to providing effective leadership in their current role. This question speaks to the heart of the program's project. When leaders have a willingness to commit to improving, taking on responsibility and developing a teachable spirit, God can make significant progress toward where the church is moving. Of those responding, 100% agreed or highly agreed; 52% agreed and 48% highly agreed respectively on the pre test. The posttest showed a 20% increase in those who highly agreed, which would indicate that this program and process had a positive affect on the participants.

I am willing to participate in ongoing leadership development and training sessions?

	1	2	3	4	5
Pre Test	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%
Post Test	0%	0%	4%	12%	84%

The final question was about ongoing leadership development of leaders to become lifelong learners. Again, 100% of those who responded at the pre test agreed or highly agreed. The most significant change came in the posttest that moved from 60% to 84%. This is critical to the project as it demonstrates that current church leaders were willing to submit to ongoing training and learning. When ministry leaders invest in their personal growth, it will play out on the stage of their respective mission field and ministry.

Bible Study – Acts 6:1-7

Below are the results of the Bible study on the book of Acts 6:1-7. On a scale of 1-5, participants were to rate the following statements as they applied to their context of ministry. These questions pertained to the participant's understanding of the biblical text in relationship to the command of God.

1=highly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=highly agree

I did not fully understand the meaning of the text before the lesson

1	2	3	4	5
8%	12%	36%	28%	16%

The responses to this question indicate that only 8% of the participants fully understood the text, while 36% were neutral and 28% agreed. When looking at those who either agreed or highly agreed represented 44% of the participants. This means that a

large section of leadership had not been able to use the meaning of this text to inform how they performed ministry. This also indicates a propensity to resist second tier leadership, especially when assuming additional responsibility is concerned.

The lesson changed my understanding of the text

1	2	3	4	5
4%	4%	20%	60%	12%

Only 8% of the participants either disagreed or highly disagree about understanding the text. However, after the lesson was taught 72% either agreed or highly agreed that the lesson changed their understanding of the text. Once leaders understanding the nature of this text, they are able to incorporate the lesson into practice in how they lead and delegate responsibilities in their respective ministries.

I was convicted by the lesson that was taught

1	2	3	4	5
0%	16%	16%	60%	8%

Conviction is an important aspect leading to change and transformation. When a person is convicted about any subject area, they are more likely to maximize their efforts toward effectiveness and completeness in that area. Similar to having a change of heart after the lesson was taught, 68% of the participants agreed or highly agreed that they were convicted by the lesson. A high level of agreement regarding the lesson gives a greater probability of leaders using the lesson learned to improve how they do ministry in their respective areas.

The lesson empowered me to action

1	2	3	4	5
8%	0%	32%	44%	16%

Only 8% of the participants were not empowered to action based on the lesson. This would indicate they either are not interested in accepting additional responsibility or they were comfortable at the level of responsibility they currently have. Interestingly, 32% of those responding were neutral, while 44% agreed and 16% highly agreed.

The lesson troubled me when I consider my leadership style

1	2	3	4	5
8%	28%	28%	20%	16%

There was a unilateral disagreement when asked if the lesson troubled participants when they considered their leadership style. While this does not cause much alarm, it does point to the degree to which the leadership in some ways resist moving to a second tier leadership model.

The lesson created a need to have comprehensive lay leadership training

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	28%	52%	20%

Although there was unilateral disagreement to the question of leadership training, most participants wanted to have comprehensive leadership training based on their current leadership understanding. Of those responding, 72% either agreed or highly agreed to comprehensive leadership training. This is another indicator that establishing a second tier leadership model would be successful and needed in the context.

More members of the church need to have this lesson

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	8%	52%	40%

The response to this question sends a clear signal that the participants see it necessary for a larger section of the congregation to be exposed to this level of teaching. Responses of 92% agreeing and highly agreeing further indicate that moving to a second tier leadership model would be embraced and supported.

The lesson needs to be taught again for better clarity

1	2	3	4	5
4%	16%	24%	36%	20%

Although there was a strong desire for the teaching to be expanded to include a larger portion of the congregation, there were a disproportionate number of participants who believed the lesson needed to be taught again. Only 20% of the participants highly agreed to have the lesson taught again and 36% agreed. Combined, 56% felt the lesson should be taught again, while 92% of the participants believe it necessary to expand the exposure of this teaching.

After the lesson, I am willing to participate in the development of a strong lay leadership ministry.

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	16%	36%	48%

It was reported that 48% of the participants highly agreed to participate in the development of a strong lay leadership ministry. Another 36% agreed and 16% were neutral. When combined, agreed and highly agreed responses totaled 84%; this number

indicates that more participants are willing to assist in developing a stronger lay leadership program.

Bible Study – Exodus 18:13-27

Below are the results of the Bible study on the book of Exodus 18:13-27. On a scale of 1-5, participants were to rate the following statements as they applied to their context of ministry. These questions pertained to the participant's understanding of the biblical text in relationship to the command of God.

1=highly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=highly agree

I did not fully understand the meaning of the text before the lesson

1	2	3	4	5
4%	32%	32%	20%	12%

There seemed to be a balanced response to the question of understanding the text as presented. While delegation is not a new subject, the responses provided by this question say a stronger emphasis should be placed in teaching and modeling delegation.

The lesson changed my understanding of the text

1	2	3	4	5
0%	4%	24%	60%	12%

While 20% responded to understanding the text, after the lesson, 60% understood. This represented a 40% change in opinion. There is still a significant number of participants who were neutral at 24%.

I was convicted by the lesson that was taught

1	2	3	4	5
0%	4%	28%	64%	4%

This question captured 64% of the respondents saying they agreed and 4% highly agreed. Additionally 24% of the respondents were neutral which would suggest they were neither convicted nor not based on the lesson taught. The 4% that were not convicted was a small number in relation to the whole. See analysis for this question on the Book of Acts for more information regarding conviction.

The lesson empowered me to action

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	12%	60%	28%

Clearly based on the responses, those who participated were called to action with 60% agreeing and 28% highly agreeing. This is a strong indicator of the acceptance of the proposed second tier leadership model.

The lesson troubled me when I consider my leadership style

1	2	3	4	5
20%	32%	28%	16%	4%

There were a wide number of considerations for this question. Disagreeing and highly disagreeing totaled over half of the choices, 28% were neutral and 20% either agreed or highly agreed. This is an indication of the various levels of confidence leaders placed on their leadership style based on the lesson taught.

The lesson created a need to have comprehensive lay leadership training

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	24%	48%	28%

The answers to this question showed a strong interest in additional leadership training, especially when it came to appropriate and effective ways to delegate within the life of the leaders ministry. No participant disagreed or disagreed highly, which is a positive sign toward growth in the existing leaders of the church with an opportunity to train new leaders in the biblical methodology regarding delegation.

More members of the church need to have this lesson

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	12%	36%	48%

Just as the participants agreed that comprehensive leadership training was needed, the also felt that more members of the church would benefit from this lesson being taught to them. An overwhelming 84% said they agreed or highly agreed; those who highly agreeing were 48%.

The lesson needs to be taught again for better clarity

1	2	3	4	5
8%	16%	40%	28%	8%

The respondents felt the lesson needed to be taught to additional church members and develop a comprehensive leadership program around delegation, however 40% were neutral on having it taught again for clarity.

After the lesson, I am willing to participate in the development of a strong lay leadership ministry.

1	2	3	4	5
0%	0%	4%	48%	48%

A very encouraging number of participants said that they would be willing to participate in the development of a strong lay leadership ministry; 48% agreed and 48% highly agreed. Again, this becomes an affirmation toward the development of a second tier leadership model for the church.

Spiritual Gift Assessment

Each participant was asked to complete a spiritual gifts assessment. Prior to the assessment being administered, they were also asked to list what they thought their spiritual gifts were. While this exercise was not tabulated based on the sheer volume of the answers provided, there was significant time allotted to discuss participant's perceived gifts versus the gift assessment results.

Those who responded overwhelmingly reported that the assessment of gifts and their perception of gifts were not consistent. This stimulated a good discussion of serving in ministry areas of giftedness versus serving in ministry areas that either were more attractive or appeared to be more important based on the historical ethos of the congregation.

The results of this exercise led to the participants discussing the added value of serving within their area of giftedness versus not doing so. Participants generally agreed that knowing where to serve was a key factor in leadership effectiveness.

The next series of discussions centered on how to move persons into a right alignment of their gifts rather than the areas they were currently serving. Many participants said they did not want to change their area of ministry service based on historical importance. Others said they were willing to move into areas that matched God's will and call on their lives based on the gift assessment.

The final observation centered on how to make this realignment happen without minimizing the current level of ministry service that existed in the church. While the solution to this concern was noted, it was not a central aspect of this project but would be considered at the conclusion of the program.

Demographic Profiles

Each participant was required to complete demographic profile. The profile asked such questions like:

- Name, age, gender
- How long have you been a member of Wayman Temple?
- Do you now where the name "Wayman" comes from?
- How long have you been an active member of any church?
- How long have you held your current leadership position?

The demographic profile was designed to identify the intentional process of developing leaders from across the church. By having members from across the church, and members who have different degrees of leadership experience and knowledge, it insured the church of having voice and representation from the entire church body rather

than a skewed number of leaders that may not represent the collective interest of the congregation.

The results of the demographic profile once tabulated played an important part in the responses given to all field data instruments. It was abundantly clear that not all participants had the same desire and interest when serving in leadership, yet it gave direction to how the second tier leadership model should be developed and designed.

Conclusion

The overall project was successful to the degree that it indicated a strong willingness to understand the tremendous burden the pastor shouldered while leading the church. Although the church has been highly successful over the twenty-three years of my ministry, the toll of leading without effective and proper delegation of responsibility was evident. The project gave those who had been serving in positions for an extended number of years (eight or greater) the opportunity to perform self-assessments and evaluate the impact of staying in office over a long number of years.

An important take-a-way from this project allowed the participants to agree on moving to a second tier leadership model in addition to establishing time limits on the number of years a person could serve in any one position before they had to retire the position to new people with fresh perspectives. This decision provided a groundswell of possibility for the future of lay leadership for the church. Although the AME church has mandatory leadership positions as a part of the organized body of the AME church, providing term limits was deemed to be a necessary component to the success of the second tier leadership model.

Coming into the doctor of ministry program, I had no idea of the impact of the synergy between pastor and people, and its ability to determine the overall effectiveness of the church. Instinctively, I knew something was amiss, however, I could never put my finger on the pulse of such a revelation. This project not only transformed the way I view ministry, it also provided the ground out of which the congregation could be strategically positioned for lay leadership success. The future of the church would be brighter, and the desire to retire at the age of sixty-five would be a greater reality than I realized.

There has been personal and congregational growth as a result of this project. It not only proved the need for a second tier leadership model, it also allowed the current leadership team to realize the importance of supporting the pastor throughout the life of the church by taking responsibility for areas of ministry that were not specific to the role of pastor. This learning from the pew should serve the congregation well in the years to come. The learning received from this project model could also provide a platform for future leaders to aspire to.

A key aspect to the project model was a decision to have a facilitator from outside the congregation conduct the field study. This individual gave the leaders an opportunity to speak freely and embrace the significance of leading from the pew as identified in the proposed second tier leadership model. The facilitator was a seasoned pastor outside the denomination, a person who was not familiar with the AME Book of Discipline, and a person who could ask questions that may have been deemed non-essential by a pastor or person familiar with the internal organizational structure of the AME church. This person posed a risk and a challenge for the participants. The tough questions that were raised had

to be answered in order for the facilitator to have clarity in leading the participants toward credible and reliable answers to the biblical bases of shared leadership.

There were a few areas that if done again would be modified. Providing more time for discussion, timely feedback to the participants, and being intentional about engaging new members would be a must. Utilizing context associates who do not participate in the actual fieldwork is also an area that would be implemented. It was not until the fieldwork was completed that we understood how much additional work was required for those who participated in the project. It was clear that by the end of the data tabulation phase, the context associates time and energy began to be depleted. I am thankful that they pressed their way to assist in getting all of this work done. Finally, I would not personally analyze the data, but have the facilitator, or other persons gifted in data analysis to provide a fresh perspective and insight on the responses offered by the participants. This seems to be the best approach to making a critical decision for the future leadership of the church.

This project was an emotional journey for the participants, the congregation and me; they all know of my plans of retiring within the next five years. Although this process was emotional and heartfelt, it also provided the church an opportunity to look at the future and began planning for the kind of pastor who would replace me. While pastoral decisions in the AME church is the responsibility of the area Bishop, being able to articulate what is needed for the church would be necessary for a smooth transition once I have retired.

This project is a replicable leadership model that can be conducted in churches of all sizes, especially smaller congregation where paying for appropriate staffing would be

a large financial burden. Knowing how to energize, empower, educate, and engage leaders across the church are gifts that all congregations deserve. It is my hope that this project can be used in my episcopal district and among pastoral colleagues from other denominations and faith systems who struggle with effective delegation to lay leaders to lead God's church.

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